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no responsibility, however, for manuscripts submitted to him.]

Diary of the Week.

So far as we can gather, the majority has come back firmly, unitedly, and passionately resolved to subordinate every question to that of the veto. On the main issue no division exists; but on the question of tactics Sir Edward Russell, the veteran editor of the "Liverpool Post," and one of the wisest, as well as the most moderate, advisers of Liberalism, has raised a point which tests the extreme keenness of the party. Sir Edward insists that the question of the veto must be put even before the Budget, and that to pass that instrument before settling accounts with the Lords would be to surrender the only weapon by which the privilege of the Commons can be maintained. The fighting power of the Government would then have disappeared, and when the question of the veto was raised, the answer might be made that the issue raised by Lord Lansdowne's resolution had been settled. "The Budget has been referred to the people, and now you have got it. What more do you want?" Strong and prompt measures will, we are sure, prove to be the wisest. The fear that Mr. Balfour can come back to power, which the "Westminster" cherishes, seems to us illusory. Mr. Balfour can do nothing. His Ministry, if he could ever form it, would be made up of items and firebrands; the majority would, of course, refuse him supplies, and the Crown a second dissolution, which, indeed, he has no constitutional right to demand. In a word, he could never reach power, and, in our view, does not desire power.

SURELY in such a situation the Ministry has all the cards in its hands. Both the Labor Party and the main lead of Irish Nationalists (the latter in a very able and friendly article in the "Freeman's Journal") have signified their general adherence to the policy of attack

on the veto, and their desire not to embarrass the Government in pursuing it. On their side, we hope that the Government will reciprocate this friendliness, and that especially in the new appointments. For example, it is most desirable that, if a change takes place in the Board of Trade, the Minister who succeeds Mr. Churchill should be in full sympathy with the Labor policy of his predecessor, and have the power as well as the will to carry it out.

In any case we are convinced that the Parliamentary Party will assent to the passage of the Budget, strongly desired as it is by all sections of reformers, only on the understanding of an immediate and practically simultaneous concentration upon the veto. On that condition alone can faith be kept with the constituents. Reports from Scotland and from the North of England are unanimous that the question of the Lords was even more closely and fervently debated than that of the Budget, and that Mr. Asquith's pledge at the Albert Hall has everywhere been interpreted as an earnest of immediate action. Many Liberal members have already made it known that they only hold their seats on condition of dealing with the veto. This is also the basis of the understanding with the Irish and of any closer relations that may be formed with the Labor Party. Upon it the Government possess a majority nearer 130 than 120, and we are clear that not a vote should be wasted nor a moment lost.

THE elections are now complete, with the exception of those for the Scottish Universities and for Orkney and Shetland. If these three constituencies adhere to the parties which now represent them, the new House of Commons will consist of 275 Liberals, 273 Conservatives, 72 Nationalists, 10 Independent Nationalists, or O'Brienites, and 40 Labor members. Thus the Protectionist Party is in a minority of 124 votes against a Government supported by a coalition of Liberals, Nationalists, and Labor men, who are unquestionably solid on the issue of the veto. The actual majority will even be larger than this, for Mr. Lowther is included in the ranks of the Conservatives, and he will undoubtedly be the Speaker of the new Parliament, while Mr. Chamberlain's, and probably Mr. Collings's, attendance is impossible. Leaving Ireland out, the Administration possesses a British majority of sixty-three. The results in the North are very striking. Scotland and the counties of Lancashire, Yorkshire, Cheshire, Derbyshire, Durham, Northumberland, Cumberland, and Westmorland, send to Parliament 175 Liberal and Labor members and only fifty-four Conservatives. But for splits, the supporters of the Government would have been raised to 180, and those of the Opposition would have fallen to forty-nine. The Progressive majority in votes amounts to 388,812.

MUCH has been said as to the quality of the respective votes for the Government and the Opposition. On this point we have before us an instructive piece of evidence. A leading publisher writes to say that, for the purpose of selling books, his travellers divide England

in half: one section takes the North, the other the South; the Northern section stretching from Birmingham upwards and including Ireland and Scotland. The returns of the Northern travellers are more than double the returns of the Southern travellers, the conclusion being that Northern England, with its great artisan populations, contributes the main body of the thinking and reading classes. Southern England, with its pleasure resorts, cathedral cities, and garrison towns, all more or less associated with wealth, is, in comparison with the North, a non-reading population. The Government, therefore, may fairly be said to rest in large measure on the working brain and the reflective forces of the country.

WE observe that the "Daily Chronicle" and the "Daily News" have both inaugurated and vigorously prosecuted a movement for raising funds for a democratic and Free Trade propaganda in the constituencies, to counteract the doings and sayings of the monstrous regiment of "Tariff Reformers" that has just retired into winter quarters. We strongly approve the object; but we hope that the movements will coalesce, and that the newspapers concerned will drop their special organisations as soon as a competent central machinery has been devised. This is a matter for the Liberal Party as a whole, and there could hardly be a more important one.

EIGHTY associated Labor Exchanges were opened on Tuesday, and Mr. Churchill, who made a tour of inspection of some of the London offices, has promised that by June next 230 will be at work. All over the country there has been a rush of workmen, chiefly of the unskilled classes, seeking registration. The women who have applied have been mostly clerks, shop assistants, and typists. Employers have been sympathetic, and in course of time there will, no doubt, be regular recourse to the Exchanges both by workmen and by capitalists.

THE Seine floods are very slowly but quite steadily sinking. The plain below Paris which stretches toward Saint Germain is still a lake, but in the city itself only a few streets beside the river are now under water. A thick and unclean coating of mud remains where the flood had been. Sanitary measures are being taken with the utmost energy, and as yet there has been no sign of an epidemic. But communications are still nearly everywhere broken, and the consequent unemployment continues. We are only now beginning to learn how serious is the suffering and loss in the villages and remoter suburbs. At Rueil the water on Wednesday still lay four feet deep in the streets, and out of 2,000 inhabitants as many as 1,500 need relief. At Saint Denis there are gathered some 1,500 refugees, and some 8,000 workmen are unemployed. There has been some marauding, which, however, was soon suppressed by popular indignation. The soldiers and sailors have behaved with the greatest energy and resource in the work of rescue and prevention.

OUR Paris correspondent writes:—"It is an experience worth remembering to have assisted at so splendid a demonstration of courage and coolness, of humanity and solidarity, as Paris has given to the world during this terrible week. We have been treated during the last few years to many laments over the decadence of morality in France. Paris has given the lie to the croakers. We need not be concerned for the future of a people that has faced a disaster as this has been faced. The rescue work was magnificently organised: soldiers,

sailors, firemen, police, and voluntary helpers were all splendid. And the measures taken by the authorities could not have been better thought out. Throughout Paris the Seine on Friday was above the level of the soil; it was kept back only by the parapets. These were strengthened or heightened and gaps caused by paths leading down to the river were walled up. The result was that we never had water on the Place de la Concorde, or the Champs Elysées, or the Tuileries; some of the Quais were flooded, but not, except in the few cases already mentioned, by the Seine itself."

TURKISH bazaars and Viennese cafés have been more disturbed during this week by rumors and fear than at any time since the acute stages of the late Balkan complication. This nervousness had several causes. Anything may happen in Greece; Crete is nearing some period or crisis in her fever; Bulgaria is restive, and Macedonia disturbed. But the real fear in the background is, we imagine, of some Austrian move. We know, for our part, of no warrant for this alarm, but the Turks clearly think they know something. The sudden and clumsy attempt of Baron Aehrenthal to patch up a reconciliation with Russia is probably the origin of the unrest. The Turks dread above all else a renewal of the partnership between the two Eastern Empires which used to control their destinies. They can hardly expect a wantonly aggressive move. But, in any one of the complications which Greeks, Bulgars, or Cretans have it in their power to cause in the immediate future, such a partnership would be an awkward and perhaps a dangerous factor for them. They trust the disinterested influence of Great Britain and France, but they will never bring themselves to confide in the two Empires which used to be grouped during the Macedonian complication as the "interested Powers."

TOWARDS Bulgaria Hakki Pasha seems to be behaving with a commendable prudence. She can make herself respected. Some eight Macedonian Bulgars have been sentenced to death at Salonica for the murder of a Servian agent. What the evidence was no man can say, for they were tried in secret by one of the summary "brigandage" tribunals—a detestable expedient in time of peace. Even were they guilty, such a punishment contrasts too sharply with the leniency shown to the Turkish contrivers of massacre at Adana. The Bulgarians of the kingdom at once manifested their anger, and Hakki Pasha has wisely sent a reprieve to Salonica. Towards Greeks and Cretans he shows no such gentleness. They are not formidable. He has issued a sort of circular which reads like an ultimatum, threatening drastic action if the Cretans should send deputies to the National Assembly. This is a merely provocative move, for the Assembly cannot meet in Greece for several months to come. There are rumors of warlike preparations, probably exaggerated. To us the most ominous fact is the resignation on grounds of "ill-health" of Sir Douglas Gamble, the English Admiral who commands the Turkish Fleet. Such a withdrawal would be inevitable if Turkey had decided on some aggressive action. A British squadron, consisting of a battleship and three cruisers, has sailed for Greek waters, and it is said that the Powers propose once more to occupy Crete—a very proper precaution.

MEANWHILE, the internal situation in Greece is one of steadily increasing anarchy. At the suggestion of M. Venezelos, the very capable Cretan Premier, who has been busily wire-pulling in Athens, the Military League

has unmasked a fresh battery. It has demanded the calling of a National Assembly to revise the Constitution. The Constitution may be faulty, but the changes which are publicly mentioned as desirable are relatively trivial. It is a natural suspicion that something much larger is contemplated—a constituent Assembly which might overthrow the dynasty, or establish a republic, or annex Crete. The King, the Ministry, and the wiser Opposition chiefs at first resisted this proposal, but the League followed its usual procedure of confining the troops to barracks, and the menace has had the usual effect. The King has yielded, and a new Cabinet is now in power, under M. Dragoumis, a respected personality, who was, however, badly compromised in the worst phases of the Greek raids in Macedonia. Colonel Zorbas, of the League, is his Minister of War. It is a part of the bargain that the League shall dissolve when the Assembly is convoked. But no one regards this promise very seriously. The Leaguers, through Colonel Zorbas, will still control the army. It is hard to see any end to this brainless military despotism, until, perhaps, in the fulness of time, the conspirators fall out among themselves.

THE German Ambassador delivered an interesting speech on Friday at a banquet in the Hotel Cecil. Protesting against the interpretations of German policy which have been current during this election, he said that since German unity had been accomplished Germans had no further thought of aggressive war as a means of attaining national aims. The very fact that Germany is a nation in arms gives her a sense of responsibility, and she will use her strength only for some just and great purpose. Her primary aim is to develop her export trade. That is the whole meaning of *Weltpolitik*, the policy which aims at the peaceful acquisition of new markets. War can play no part in that policy, for in international exchange the destruction of one of two rivals could not advantage the other. The commerce and credit of the world is far too closely knit to make war, under modern conditions, a profitable adventure to an industrial nation. The new German fleet does not aim at supremacy on the seas. It is required to safeguard and defend the growing interests of German commerce at sea. So far from being a secret menace, the building programme has been known to all the world for ten years, and is unalterably fixed by Act.

AN entertaining Cromwellian interlude has enlivened the sittings of the Reichstag. A typical Prussian Junker, Herr von Oldenburg, remarked that the obedience of the soldier should be so absolute that at any time the Kaiser may say to any lieutenant, "Take ten men and close the Reichstag." The Reichstag was divided between laughter and anger. Some members suggested that the Captain of Koepenick was really the proper person to give such an order. The Socialists demanded that the President should call Herr von Oldenburg to order. But the President, who happens to be the hereditary Prince of Hohenlohe-Langenberg, seems to have reflected that, in Court circles, these Junker sentiments would be popular. He refused to call Herr von Oldenburg to order, and fell instead, with all the weight of his censure, on the Socialist Deputy Ledebour. On a vote taken subsequently to remove this censure, only the Poles ventured to support the Socialists. The incident is pure comedy, but it does serve to show how little reality there was in the recent agitation against "personal rule." But the Reichstag is probably quite out of touch with German opinion. The Socialists

have just won another seat by a by-election, the fourth since last year's Budget.

LAST Saturday afternoon a terrible accident occurred on the London, Brighton, and South Coast Railway, as the Brighton express to London was approaching the Stout's Nest station. One of the coaches in the middle of the train left the line; the couplings parted, the four front carriages remaining on the line; but the carriages behind were all wrecked, seven passengers were killed, and forty-two injured. From the evidence given on Tuesday at the Board of Trade inquiry, it is difficult to trace the exact cause of the disaster. The points outside the station appear to have been in good condition, and the signalman found them in working order after the accident. The chief mechanical engineer to the railway company seems to have thought that a front bogie wheel may have shifted during the journey, but he considered it improbable, and the inquiry was closed without a conclusion, as happens too frequently in these cases. Whatever was the cause, it is evidently imprudent to run these heavy expresses over points or round sharp curves at something between forty-five and fifty miles an hour, which the guard said was the rate in this case.

WE observe with pleasure that the Women's Social and Political Union have decided to drop militant tactics—for the present. Even if this is meant to be truce rather than peace, it is an event of some consequence, because it opens the way to a healing of some of the wounds made in this wretched war between men and women. We have always understood that the Government attached importance, from a social point of view, to the closing of this strife. We hope the report that prisoners belonging to the Women's Social and Political Union have just been set at liberty is evidence of this view, and we hope further that the one or two women belonging to the Freedom League, which is, we understand, included in the cessation of violent tactics, now in prison will be released, and that the pending actions against members of this body will be dropped. Then we can all begin to see a little clearer.

AN addition has been made to the long list of business and schoolmaster bishops by the appointment of Dr. Pollock to the see of Norwich. Little known as a preacher, and unknown as a writer, or even as a figure in Church activities, Dr. Pollock's success as assistant master at Marlborough, and as head master of Wellington, may be supposed to qualify him for the management of a not very difficult diocese. He is also an old blue. We should have thought that more than enough stress had been laid on the administrative side of a bishop's life; but appointment after appointment shows that it still overshadows both scholarship and saintliness. Is not the Anglican Church in danger of being managed to death?

WE regret to record the death of Mr. J. G. Talbot, who was a member for Oxford University from 1878 to the end of the last Parliament. Mr. Talbot lacked the intellectual distinction of his brother, the Bishop of Southwark, but he belonged to the same school of Churchmanship, which was also Gladstone's, and though his style betrayed a certain unreadiness of mind and timidity of thought, he was of the best type of member of Parliament. Mr. Talbot's party hardly seems to require such service as he gave it, but his line of religious thought will now be represented afresh in the House by Lord Hugh Cecil.

Politics and Affairs.

THE KING AND THE NEW PARLIAMENT.

"The ultimate authority in the English Constitution is a newly elected House of Commons; . . . no matter whether it be the imposing of a tax or the issuing a paper currency; no matter whether it be a question relating to India, or Ireland, or London—A NEW HOUSE OF COMMONS CAN DESPOTICALLY AND FINALLY RESOLVE."—*Bagehot, "The English Constitution."*

"The House of Commons may, as was explained, assent in minor matters to the revision of the House of Lords, and submit, in matters about which it cares little, to the suspensive veto of the House of Lords; but when freshly elected it is ABSOLUTE—it can rule as it likes, and decide as it likes"—*The Same.*

"The head of the Executive can overcome the resistance of the Second Chamber by choosing new members of that Chamber; IF HE DO NOT FIND A MAJORITY, HE CAN MAKE A MAJORITY."—*The Same.*

It is, we suppose, the business of the managers of the Opposition to put before the people of this country, and, we are bound to add, before its Sovereign, their own view of the political situation. But it is none the less the duty of the Government and its friends to bring that view into some relation with the facts. One correction is, we think, indispensable. The Opposition, by a direct violation of the law and custom of the Constitution, and by a long course of action subversive of its spirit and fatal to its practice, have challenged the powers of the Crown and brought up the whole problem of its relations to Lords and Commons. Now, they say, let us "leave the King out of the question." They should have thought of that last year and the preceding years. They could have left him out of the question, had it not been for their blind rage against the Budget, and their resolve to cut down a Liberal Government at all costs. They could have shown some feeling for the difficulties of his position, when, without even informing him of their intentions, their leaders devised and compassed their plot against the privileges of the House of Commons. Historians of the twentieth century will have some pretty strong remarks to make on the way the King has been treated by the party from which he had a right to expect consideration. It might have been thought that even Mr. Balfour's selfishness would have been stirred when he surveyed the inevitable consequences of setting the two Houses in acute conflict, and leaving the Crown to find an adjustment. No such vision crossed the brain of the wreckers who brought about the revolution of last November. The Crown might shift for itself, while they settled their account with Mr. Lloyd George. The election might yield a victory, and then all would be well. Even if they failed, there were other tricks in the bag, with (best of all) the hope that the King might be induced to act against the Constitution.

Well, they have failed, and now, forsooth, when the King has authoritative counsellors, when the country has decided to retain the men on whose advice he dissolved Parliament, and to accept their policy, the voices to which he must listen are those of the defeated party, able to count only 273 votes in the new House of Commons. For the second time the country has decided that it will not have Mr. Balfour at

any price. Yet Mr. Balfour is to govern England. The Opposition is in the hands, not of Conservative, but of reactionary forces, which have been guilty of a flagrant *coup d'état*. Yet we are to proceed as if nothing in particular had happened, and as if the Constitution, which has stopped dead, were marching smoothly on. One party in the State, by virtue of an improper and unconstitutional use of the House of Lords, converts a trifling faction of 168 members into a winning party on four capital issues submitted to Parliament since 1906—finance, the land question, education, and the control of the liquor traffic. Now it is to continue and crown its work. "If they do these things in a green tree, what shall be done in the dry?" If the Lords and their agent in the Commons, or Mr. Balfour and his handy-men in the Lords, thus thwarted and repulsed a majority of 340, what measure of gracious forbearance will they hold out to a majority of 124?

The Tory Party have, therefore, set a pretty dish before the King. Let us, without using the language either of insincerity or of mere flattery, be thankful that at such a moment the Crown is in such good hands. "The value," says Bagehot, "of a discreet, calm, wise Monarch, if such should happen to be reigning at the acute crisis of a nation's destiny, is priceless. He can prevent years of tumult, save bloodshed and civil war, lay up a store of grateful fame to himself, prevent the accumulated intestine hatred of each party to its opposite." The Tory Party, indeed, are prepared to see this store of good-will spilt on the ground. They contemplate, without dismay, the abandonment by the Crown of the position which has given it its firm hold on the affections of the people. They see the Sovereign descending from the lofty position of impartiality which he and his predecessors have so long occupied, to the admiration of the Empire and of the world. They call upon him to descend into the arena of party strife, to reject the advice of his Ministers and the representatives of the people; to exclude the Liberal Party from office, and to convert the entire forces of Liberalism, Labor, and Nationalism into a permanent Opposition. They call, in short, for an even more complete upset of constitutional traditions than that unsuccessfully attempted by the House of Lords on November 30th. In making this demand they ignore not only the natural disposition and character of the Monarch, but the essential conditions of limited sovereignty. The King is not the actual ruler, the final source of energy in the British Constitution. He is the permanent and impartial Chairman of our Board of Empire. He is set to watch the sway of its dominant forces, and to keep something like an equilibrium between them. But this is a work of interpretation, of guidance, not of initiation. All our constitutional writers agree that the final working authority exists in the will of the nation, expressed through the representative power. Thus our Constitution, unlike the American Constitution, possesses "a single determining energy." Obviously this will exists at its utmost strength and purity when the House of Commons is newly elected. Then—according to Bagehot, the most lucid and penetrative of our modern writers on the Constitu-

tion—it is really autocratic. A new House of Commons can do anything and will anything. *A fortiori*, it can brush all serious obstacles from its path, and need tolerate lesser obstacles only by its own free choice. On this point the authority we have quoted is clear, and he has Professor Dicey's powerful support. "The head of the Executive can overcome the resistance of the Second Chamber by choosing new members of that Chamber. If he do not find a majority, he can make a majority." In other words, so powerful is this organ of the nation when it has received a fresh impress of its master's will, that its chief instrument and spokesman, the Prime Minister, is himself clothed with the necessary power to end the opposition of the House of Lords. His recourse to the Crown is to obtain an endorsement of that authority, which he exercises by virtue of rights inherent in and essential to the British Constitution. Bagehot, indeed, insists that this "safety valve" of the constitutional system, as he calls it, is best exercised by the direct "appointee" of the Commons, and by him alone, because, he says, few kings possess the knowledge of affairs, and also the character and temperament, which difficult political situations require in a governing head. Happily, we have a Monarch who possesses this training and these qualifications. But it is none the less true that, in thus approaching the Crown, a Minister fresh from a national mandate and from the resulting vote of a new House of Commons, is himself vested with real and far-reaching authority.

The inference from these facts is, we think, clear. The nation has spoken. The Ministry, supported by the House of Commons, is alone entitled to interpret that voice. Its power of divination is direct, and fresh from the source. No one can go behind it and pick its supporting forces to pieces. The Ministry is united, and there is no question of an alternative Cabinet. All the schemes aiming at reform of the Lords obviously wait on the settlement of the dispute as to powers. The election was taken on an abuse of power by the one House at the expense of the other, and only when that has been determined does the question of the final composition of the House of Lords arise. Withal, Mr. Asquith makes a just and reasonable demand when he declares that, as the Monarchy has long abandoned its absolute veto on legislation, the House of Lords should follow its example. But if he is to be fully armed for his task, it is essential that he should act with speed, and with clear apprehension of the exclusive character of the issue. We therefore hope to see the Veto Bill introduced at the earliest moment of the Session, if possible within a few days of its inauguration. And we trust to see the King's Speech stripped bare even of the hint of legislation which does not point directly to the dominant issue.

THE USE OF THE MAJORITY.

ARITHMETIC was never the strong point of the Tariff Reformer, but we had supposed him capable of distinguishing between a plus and a minus quantity. From a perusal of the "Times," we are driven to conclude that

this was too favorable a view. The "Times" distinguishes three great Imperial issues on which the verdict of the constituencies has been given—national defence, the constitutional question, and Tariff Reform. On the third of them it admits some uncertainty, but on the first two "the answer is sufficiently clear," and "on both subjects it is completely reassuring to those who have upheld the Unionist and Imperialist view." One might suppose that there existed a majority of 124, comprising many Free Traders, but averse from Mr. Asquith on the supreme question of the Lords. An intelligent foreigner unacquainted with the actual figures, and reading the "Times" for the first time, might infer that on this Tariff question the country was pretty equally divided, but that the fear of constitutional changes had brought in the Unionists by a decisive majority. Now, this is worth pointing out, because it is not merely an eccentricity on the part of the "Times," but indicative of a state of mind, and also a deliberate and thoroughly unscrupulous tactic, which are widely prevalent among the Opposition. Having failed to destroy our majority, they profess to ignore it. They claim the verdict of the country for themselves, for the House of Lords, and against the Budget, and they claim it with just as much right as Mr. Gladstone would have had if he had claimed the verdict of 1886 as a decision in favor of Home Rule. Mr. Asquith's majority is larger than that which gave Lord Salisbury a six years' tenure of power. It is little inferior to the majority which defeated the Liberals in 1895 and inaugurated ten years of Tory rule. It is, moreover, a majority elected, as nearly as any majority can be under our system, on a single and comprehensive issue. With remarkable clearness, and with justifiable iteration, Mr. Asquith put before the electors the supreme question of the day. He declared his position at the Albert Hall. He confined his election address to the single point. He declined all promises of legislation on any question whatever until the authority of the House of Commons should be vindicated. The result is that he comes back to power with one of the largest majorities of modern times—a majority differing, indeed, within itself upon some issues, but united and concentrated on the one issue that governs all the rest.

There is no doubt of the opinion of the country. Tariff Reform has captured some of the agricultural districts and some of the decaying industries and ill-organised trades. But nowhere has the action of the House of Lords gained votes for the Opposition, and nowhere have its claims any serious social force to rely upon for a backing. It remains for the Government to execute the mandate of the constituencies, and with that object to subordinate everything to the vindication of the rights of the representative House. The Opposition places its trust in the inherent difficulties of the constitutional position. The limitation of the legislative veto, together with the formal extinction of the financial veto, must be incorporated in a Bill—it will, of course, be a single Bill—and this Bill must be accepted by the House of Lords. It is at this point that they expect to find salvation. The Lords are to throw out the Bill, and thus force a second dissolution within

six, perhaps within three or four, months—a dissolution which is to find the Liberals exhausted in energy and finance, and their opponents prepared to be borne to power on the ever-flowing tide of beer. But at this point they make a little miscalculation. There exists, as we remind our readers in the preceding article, an ultimate resource known to the Constitution, by which the unreasonable opposition of the Upper House can be overcome; that is to say, by the creation of peers. There is no doubt whatever, in view of his Albert Hall speech, that Mr. Asquith will advise his Majesty that the time has come when this instrument, disagreeable and objectionable as it may be, must be brought into play. With characteristic disregard of precedent and of constitutional ethics, the Opposition appears to assume that the King will reject the advice of his Ministers for the sake of those who, we must assume, rejected his advice in the autumn. They may not see the full implication of this position, but it amounts to nothing less than the permanent institution of the Unionist Party in power, without regard to the views of the electorate or the composition of the House of Commons.

A demand so extravagant must be met with firmness from the outset. Fortunately, Mr. Asquith has made his position perfectly clear. Speaking at once for himself and his colleagues, he declared that he would neither assume nor hold office without adequate guarantees that the work of the House of Commons would not be wasted and its energies spent in ploughing the sands. The nature of these guarantees is known to all men; they consist in the requisite power to overcome in the last resort the opposition of the House of Lords, and to this end there is one means, and one only, known to the constitution. In the faith that the requisite guarantees would be obtained, constituencies have been fought and won, and even if there were any thought of paltering with the question among our leaders, which there is not, members could not face their constituencies with a record of pledges broken in this vital matter. It is urged by a few faint hearts that by keeping his pledge Mr. Asquith risks the possibility of a second dissolution. That risk is always before us, but let us ask fairly in which direction lies the best chance of averting it, in facing the question now while the controversy is fresh upon us, when no new issue has arisen, when a second dissolution would mean the putting of precisely the same question twice over to the electorate, or in deferring the decision till some months have passed, when the situation will, in fact, have changed in some material respects, and a second election, if troublesome to all concerned, would not be too absurd to contemplate? If, to take the worst that could happen, we suppose that Mr. Asquith failed at this juncture to obtain the guarantees of which he spoke, what would be the alternative? Mr. Balfour might attempt to form a Ministry and to carry on the Government! What would be his position? How could he deal with the existing House of Commons, and what shadow of right would he find for recommending a dissolution? His task would be hopeless, and if he attempted it, it could only be with the result of re-establishing Mr. Asquith more firmly in power, with a more assured authority for insisting on the conditions upon which

alone he or any Liberal Minister can henceforward hold office. These conditions may be expressed in a moderate form, provided always that the fundamental object is secured, that after every allowance has been made for the claim of suspensory and revising powers there shall come a point at which the will of the people, expressed through their representatives, shall prevail. To secure this result has been the object with which the election has been fought, and upon which it has been won. Nor can any Liberal Government, now or in the future, hold power except with the assurance that this object is within its grasp.

THE VALUE OF LABOR EXCHANGES.

WHEN a factory manager wants a few more "hands" in one of his departments, a builder two or three more bricklayers, a tradesman another clerk or shop-assistant, his course of proceeding, so soon as our new Labor Exchanges are got into full working, will be greatly simplified. He will no longer be the creature of chance, taking on a man who happens to apply at the right time, or some one whom his foreman happens to know is out of a job, or some stray person who turns up in answer to a casual advertisement. He will ring up the Labor Exchange, stating his wants; they will tell him what men or women with the required qualifications they have on their register; if he comes down to the Exchange or sends his foreman, they will have the likely men on hand for him to inspect and interrogate; or if he will leave it to their discretion they will select the men that seem most suitable. If the local Exchange cannot directly meet his demand, it is in close, constant communication with neighboring Exchanges and can probably procure at short notice the labor he requires, or if this labor market is tight, the provincial Exchange is in touch with the whole national supply of labor through the National Exchange, and will be enabled to draw unoccupied men from some quite distant place to meet the particular demand. This will be an immense saving of time, trouble, and expense for the employer, securing him the pick of available labor from the widest area in the quickest time.

Not less advantageous is the new mechanism from the standpoint of the worker. It ought soon to banish from sight the pathetic spectacle of the workman, displaced by some new process or some trade depression, wandering from factory to factory, from yard to yard, with some dim and ever dwindling hope of being "taken on," sometimes led by vague rumor to tramp from town to town, gradually losing the expectation and even the capacity for regular employment. Hitherto, very little trouble has been taken to conserve the labor power which is the main source of our industrial civilisation: large masses of it have been suffered continually to waste and decay, poisoning by their enforced idleness the social system. Our postal, railway, financial, and other departments of profitable activity have long enjoyed clearing-houses which are veritable miracles of ingenuity. It is matter of regret, even of shame, that England, the most advanced country of the world in the arts of industry and commerce, should have waited for Ger-

many, Holland, and other nations to lead the way in establishing a clearing-house for labor.

The success of the seventy Labor Exchanges now set up in all our chief industrial centres depends upon the fulfilment of two conditions. The first is a favorable attitude of mind in employers and workers. This is a matter of goodwill and of faith, a conviction that an impartial regard for social welfare dominates the administrator of the Exchange. The whole idea of the Exchange is based on a reasonable belief that to secure the proper post for the proper man is of equal advantage to both of the parties concerned. When employers on the one hand, workers and their unions on the other, learn by experience that the Exchange officials are not endeavoring to interfere with or to restrict, but rather to facilitate and enlarge, their choice and rights of bargaining, they will, we are convinced, be willing to adopt the Labor Exchange in the same spirit as the telephone or any other labor-saving device of our modern civilisation. How far and how fast this habit grows, will largely depend upon the discretion with which the able men appointed to manage the local Exchanges perform duties which, particularly at the outset, will involve great resourcefulness and responsibility.

The other condition of success is the early provision of those other instruments required to give efficacy to an unemployed policy. Though Labor Exchanges will abate the worry and the waste of unemployment, they do not furnish a remedy. Their operation will not sensibly increase the aggregate volume of employment. When a general wave of depression spreads over the national trade, large numbers of workmen registering their want of work at the Exchanges will not be able to find employment until trade revives: skilled hands, displaced by some new labor-saving machine rapidly introduced into the trade, will not easily pass into any allied trade at ordinary times. Thus it may well come to pass that the inability of Labor Exchanges to find work for most or many of the applicants may lead to disappointment, disparagement, and neglect. For this reason, if for no other, it is urgently necessary that, so soon as political emergencies allow, the other related sections of the unemployed policy, especially the insurance scheme already promised, should be brought into being. If every man in the building or the engineering trades can look forward with confidence to the fact that, whenever he is out of work, he can either obtain employment through the Exchange, or, in default, an income sufficient to tide him and his family over the period of idleness, a most notable advance in social order and social justice will have been made. The extension of the insurance scheme to all the staple trades, accompanied by the provision through the Labor Exchanges of "a waiting salary" for workers in those trades to which a compulsory insurance scheme may be inapplicable, will be a practical solution of the gravest problem of unemployment. Until these proposals are clothed in legislation, and some further machinery is devised for dealing with the cases which the Exchanges will sift out as unemployable, the full utility of the Labor Exchange must rest in abeyance.

Though further delay in the development of this un-

employed policy will justly rank as one count in the indictment against the Lords, we cannot refrain from expressing our deep regret that the Government did not in the beginning of their career press forward this constructive policy. The defence of Free Trade, entrusted to them four years ago, urgently demanded it. Its neglect has placed in the hands of our Protectionists by far the most formidable weapon they possess, and one which they have wielded with immense effect in this General Election. It was evident four years ago that Free Traders had no arguments, simple and popular, by which they could meet effectively the passionate and specious appeals which their adversaries made for Tariff Reform as a cure for local trade depression and unemployment. Recognising as they did that Free Trade could not secure fullness and regularity of employment, and aware that Protection could not increase, but must diminish, the aggregate of national employment, they failed to take due account of the forcible appeals which could be made to the narrower local outlooks of ordinary men by politicians bent upon the art of electioneering. The only effective answer to these appeals consists in completing the machinery of which Labor Exchanges are the foundation. We must establish an instrument of social order, such as is most comprehensively described in the Minority Report of the Poor Law Commission, which shall secure for the body of genuine working-men and women in the country the open road to adequate subsistence upon honorable terms. Nothing short of this satisfies the sense of justice in the breast of the worker as he confronts the hazards of his life.

THE PURPOSE OF GERMAN ARMAMENTS.

THE speech which the German Ambassador delivered at a banquet in London last Friday was interesting, not merely as an apology for the German navy, but also as an innovation in diplomatic practice. It went far beyond the platitudes about amity and peace which are customary on ceremonial occasions. It was, for all its quietness of form and its tact in phrasing, a consciously polemical utterance. It was an answer to exaggerations and interpretations which have played a part in the General Election, and it was spoken before that election was technically quite completed. The speech in itself has been much noted and commented upon. But it is a tribute to Count Metternich's skill that its comparative novelty as a procedure has passed unnoticed. This new method in diplomacy is, after all, so natural and so salutary that we are all disposed to accept it as though it were the commonest instead of the rarest incident in the intercourse of peoples. It marks the abandonment of the fiction which used to regard an Ambassador, first, as a species of international courtier despatched by one monarch to another, and, later, as an official of the Foreign Office accredited to do business with other officials as remote and sacrosanct as himself. He is gradually becoming the recognised spokesman of one nation to another, and it is proper that a spokesman should speak. The Germans, who know how to combine modernity in method with a very rigid aristocratic and monarchical tradition, have gone further than any other

European people in discarding the reticences of the older diplomacy. It happened that Count Pourtales in St. Petersburg was making, almost on the same day, a speech as outspoken, and yet in all probability as calculated, as Count Metternich's. Our own tradition is bound as yet by all the old rigidities of silence. Our diplomatists abhor the platform as our Foreign Office ignores the Press.

The burden of the Ambassador's very quiet and temperate answer to English alarmists was a denial of the current Jingo suspicion that, in rebuilding her fleet, Germany aims at an eventual supremacy at sea. His statements, one fears, will make little impression in the quarter at which they are aimed. When an obsession has gone so far as this, any attempt to remove it is apt to be treated as one proof the more of a Machiavellian design. A Power which did scheme to build an Armada in secret would not scruple to use specious explanations as a screen. Yet the salient fact about the German preparations has been their candor and publicity. The whole scheme was mapped out in advance and published to the world. Its motives and aims were embodied with an almost startling frankness in the famous preamble to the Navy Act of 1900. That preamble, as the "Manchester Guardian" points out, is commonly misquoted. It runs thus, in its cold and almost brutal calculation:—

Under the existing circumstances, in order to protect Germany's sea trade and colonies, there is one means only, viz., Germany must have a fleet of such strength that even for the mightiest naval Power, a war with her would involve such risks as to jeopardise its own supremacy.

For this purpose it is not absolutely necessary that the German fleet should be as strong as that of the greatest sea Power, because generally a great sea Power would not be in a position to concentrate all its forces against us. But even if it should succeed in confronting us in superior force, the enemy would be so considerably weakened in overcoming the resistance of a strong German fleet that, notwithstanding a victory gained, the enemy's supremacy would not at first be secured any longer by a sufficient fleet.

There is here a perfectly sane and reasonable prevision. It would be folly to deny that it refers primarily to ourselves. But the eventuality which it contemplates is certainly not a German aggression. It is rather some such attack from our side as Mr. Arthur Lee coolly speculated upon in public. We have honestly to set this German ideal of a fleet strong enough to make an attack dangerous against our own consecrated standard of a fleet strong enough to crush those of the two next greatest Powers in combination. If we can, with any show of sincerity, maintain that our standard is unaggressive, the German criterion is modesty itself. For our part, we believe that the cold and open reasoning of this preamble, so far from concealing any ulterior ambition, is an exact and scientific rendering of the precise thought which does, in fact, inspire the German building. The presupposition in the minds of those who doubt its sincerity is, we suppose, the assumption that when once a Power begins to think in terms of force, no force is worth having which is not supreme. That is a crudity which all experience contradicts. One might as well argue that, because the French army must always

be numerically inferior to the German, the French might as well disarm and fling themselves on the pitiful toleration of Europe. They know, of course, that however efficient their army may be, it can never again dream of crossing the Rhine or march to the music of "à Berlin." But it can, by a well-conceived plan of mobilisation, and by some superiority in armament, maintained by constant sacrifices and the best aid of science, hope to oppose to an invader a resistance which would make aggression a too costly and fruitless adventure. The same reasoning which inspires the French to maintain their army has tempted the Germans to re-build their fleet. Each hopes by adequate preparation to avert a conflict from which neither could expect to profit, and the chief purpose of the army in the one case, and of the fleet in the other, is to render diplomatic intercourse possible on something approaching equal terms. The breaking point, or the yielding point, in any negotiations will be postponed so long as the stronger Power is persuaded that, in the clash by which it may hope to overbear its rival, it would itself lose much of its own weight and solidity.

Count Metternich's speech was notable, not merely for the skill with which he contrived to suggest the defensive purpose of German armaments, but also for the rare excursion into a more speculative field, when he argued that modern credit and industry have made wars of aggression senseless and obsolete. Mr. Norman Angell, whose powerful tract on "Europe's Optical Illusion" was noticed in these columns, may congratulate himself, we think, on having gained a disciple in Count Metternich. The phrases, the very illustrations which have given this little book a deserved success, reappear in the Ambassador's speech. Once grasp the simple fact that all trade is an exchange, and no nation can desire the ruin of another. It is probable, indeed, that international credit is now so highly organised that the victor would suffer from the losses he inflicted on the vanquished hardly less severely than the beaten foe. A triumphant bombardment of Hamburg would no doubt mean ruin to Berlin, but it would also shake every bank and every insurance office in the City. These elementary conceptions which underlie all the modern intercourse between nations cannot be too widely popularised. War was a sane adventure when the aristocracy of the successful nation could annex the lands of the vanquished and reduce its peasantry to serfdom. The Normans behaved quite reasonably. But under modern conditions, where one community of traders and bankers can only hope to ruin another community of customers and clients, it is an unintelligible folly. When once this simple truth is grasped, a corollary follows. If war is obsolete, then armaments are a superfluous barbarism. Step by step the progress of law and custom has removed the incentives to war. Pillage on land and the confiscation of estates are utterly out of date. It remains to make the preying upon the enemy's commerce at sea equally antiquated. The preamble of the German Navy Act starts from the necessity of protecting German commerce. To secure the commerce of belligerents by international agreement is to destroy the last cogent argument for costly naval defences.

Life and Letters.

WATER-CITIES.

To the water-cities among the hurrying towns of Europe belongs an eternal crown of peace. Where no wheel has ever rumbled, there is the enduring calm. Where no whip has ever rent the air, there is the repose of a lasting kindliness. It is a literary fiction that Eastern towns are drowsy. Their cobbles ring through the long daylight to the clatter of incessant hoofs. The water-carrier and the melon-seller cry all day through the bazaar. The dogs rise up from their noon-time slumbers to chase the intruder from their traditional quarter, and to remind the human stranger of his eccentricity and his foreign garb. The thong and the stick fall amid guttural shouts upon the hides of the oxen and the worn coats of the asses. Peace comes only at sundown, when the stray traveller lights his furtive lantern, and the muezzin chants his reminder that prayer is better than sleep. If there is a world of opium and silence, it is hidden in shady courts, behind latticed windows, or in the quadrangles of the deserted Arab mosque, where the feet sink in the sand that lies deep on the flags and tiles, and memory searches for the deeds that cling to the musical name of Ibn Touloun.

The drowsy cities are the seats of sea-empires, where the spoils came in through Zuyder Zee or Adriatic, where the churches and the tombstones gloat on triumphant robberies, and the calm reposes on a past of deeds achieved. They are gloriously decadent, the two great water-cities. The canals of Amsterdam mirror none but the tall seventeenth century houses, with the dolphins that curl on either side of their rounded gables. Venice stands untroubled by present or future, massive in her enduring past. It is the silent element of water which laps them in the dignity of peace. The spell, indeed, is broken in Amsterdam, where the new red Bourse rises in its strong simplicity among tramways and carts. But the intrusion of traffic only serves to emphasise the tranquillity of the streets which border the canals. Here where the bookshops line a deserted quay, there where the barges are transformed into a market of flowers, and down those long avenues where only the ripple of a passing boat breaks the slowly moving shadow of the trees, the peace of centuries is unbroken and unassailed. The silence is only half the charm. Subtler even than the silence is the pervading sense of rest that belongs to still and untroubled water. A hurrying stream is the prototype of unrest. But water which has reached its level is the symbol of attainment. One does not ask of a canal from what melted snows its waters came, or down what gorges and cascades it flung itself in its need of calm. It has arrived. It is still. It brings its unimaginative peace to the men who build upon its banks.

It has been said of Paris during these weeks of flood that it was *Venise malgré lui*. It had, indeed, become a water-city. Boats plied through its streets. The sound of wheels was forgotten, until men must have longed for the unquiet rumble and the dusty air of traffic. The harried beasts which still survive the coming of petrol rested in their stables through a week of Puritan Sabbaths—if, indeed, their stables were not inundated. But there the parallel ends. The water came with ruin, and it may go out with pestilence. To the chance foreigner or the curious crowd which descended from the safe heights of Montmartre, the spectacle of the lake on the Champs Elysées and the canal in the Rue St. Honoré may have seemed merely odd and astonishing. The Parisian gaiety is equal to the task of extracting merriment out of mud, and laughter out of danger. The solemn middle-aged merchants and matrons climbing up ladders into their first-floor windows, and the gilded youth concealing long sticks of bread under their fur cloaks must, indeed, have made an entertaining spectacle. One smiles to think of deputies walking along a raised plank as they left the Palais Bourbon, for all the world as though a buccaneer were behind them. There is a touch of comedy in the exciting hunts in tranquil suburbs in which sailors from the fleet chased

the pirates of the bakeries and the game shops. But the main note in all the chronicles of the flood is one of tragedy, faced, indeed, with energy and courage, but frankly realised in all its perils. While the good citizen felt anxious for the safety of the public buildings, the plain man watched for cracks in the walls of his jerry-built villa. And it was a triumphant destroyer, which swirled up to the parapets of the bridges. The dead shepherd chased his heifer past the closed doors of the Morgue. A wayside crucifix from some submerged Calvary told of ruined villages, as it crossed the shadow of Notre Dame. There was nothing in all this of the peaceful decadence of a water city. The Socialist newspapers chronicled day by day the miseries of the unemployed, and among the tombs of the disembodied great, the homeless slept on the marbles of the Panthéon. The ruin of angry waters surged even into the inner city through sewers and tunnels, and the engineer asked himself whether the street, which was a canal to-day, might not sink like the roof of a flooded mine to-morrow. It was a disaster which overshadowed its petty and ridiculous discomforts. Day and night the Seine and its island assumed a novel and tragic beauty. The Cathedral stood out in new perspective above the flood, like a tower isolated upon a lake, and the devil on its turret leered at the carcasses which swept past him on the waters. One fancies him, like the Gothic spirit on the "Auld Brig" of Ayr, rejoicing in the peril of the new bridges and presaging the ruin of the upstart world around him—

"As yet ye little ken about the matter,
But twa-three winters will inform ye better,
When heavy dark continued a'-day rains
Wi' deepening deluges o'erflow the plains . . .
Then down ye'll hurl, deil nor ye ever rise!
And dash the gumlie jaups up to the pouring skies,
A lesson sadly teaching to your cost,
That Architecture's noble art is lost."

One can fit into that landscape the cruel birds from strange latitudes which float above the river and hail the devil of the turret in Méryon's mad, immortal etching.

The catastrophe sets one reflecting upon the incurable improvidence of our kind. These floods are no rare happenings. The last which attained to anything like the same proportions was in 1876. But as many as fourteen are on record during the past century. Below Paris, and in open country, they may be comparatively harmless. But the very precautions which seem to tame the river, the quays, the parapets, and, above all, the bridges, make the flood when it comes peculiarly ruinous. The engineers and architects of the Second Empire were well aware of the danger, and calculated the height of their parapets in accordance with a long experience. But a thriftless generation since their day has allowed the parapets to be pierced, and created a new and much more serious danger in the tunnels and sewers. Forestry is not a neglected art in France. Yet the first days of the flood brought from the Vosges and the hills, whence the Marne and the Yonne draw their waters, complaints of the destruction of ancient forests and of taxes which discourage the enterprise of the individual proprietor. Engineers came forward to explain how safety might be purchased by the cutting of a canal above Paris, which, in times of flood, would diminish the waters of the river before it could break on the obstacle of the island and the bridges. It would certainly be a costly insurance, but no one reckons the loss to Paris from this single flood at less than a million sterling. That million may be multiplied twentyfold before this century closes; for as the city grows and values enhance, the loss from each flood must inevitably break the record of its predecessors. Already, amid the pressure of relief work and the collection of charity, the Republic has found time to nominate a Scientific Commission. It will be a curious experience to watch how its recommendations fare at the hands of successive Ministers of Finance, as the memory of the flood is submerged by some naval panic, and the pressure of financiers eager for the penetration of Morocco obliterates the recollection of these weeks of dearth and peril. One foresees how Govern-

ment after Government will admit the imperative necessity, while Budget after Budget escapes the unwelcome burden. The law of averages is a poor stimulus to thrift and foresight. No generation is likely in the Seine valley to escape a disastrous flood. But the happy chance, verified by long years of immunity, is always there. Some Parisian Noah will acquire the name of crank by an annual interpellation in the Chamber. But the ark will not be built, nor the canal dug. It is a happy providence—the improvidence which digs the terraced vineyards on Vesuvius, and so kindly built Pompeii for our instruction. When every disease has its vaccine, when we cease to shake hands for fear of infection, when we restrict our diet to proteid pills and Metchnikoff curds, then, perhaps, we shall provide for floods and evacuate the zones of earthquake. But it will be a prudent and joyless and sterilised existence that is left to us, when the milk of human kindness has been Pasteurised and the wine of life has lost the bacillus of danger.

"LA VÉRITÉ VRAIE."

By all means let us have the truth, the whole truth, and all the rest of it. If, as Mr. Edmund Gosse told the London Institute last Tuesday, there is a false and timid delicacy which hinders the truth of biography, let us shovel it away. Delicacy is all very well, and we are sorry to trample on anyone's feelings, but we are seeking truth—truth, though it blast us, as the Sartor said of spiritual things. We are out for truth, and are not to be put off with the golden syrup of relatives who keep one eye on the family credit, nor with the icy enumerations of an epitaph. The truth we seek may be harsh and unrefined and crude. It may poison our preconceptions, and disintegrate our reverence. That does not matter. Give us the truth about everyone, however unpleasant, however disillusionising, and we shall be grateful. Let no crook in the obliquities of character be smoothed over or concealed. Let the merciful darkness be explored, and the closest intimacies be uncovered. A mother may become merchandise, and a man play the Devil's Advocate over his father's bones. But at all costs we will have the truth about the dead, whether it be good or whether it be evil. For the truth is great, and will prevail over the defenceless.

No fear, no shame, no awe of shattered idols can deter us from that search, and, without jesting, we would only raise the further question, What is truth? It is very likely that Mr. Gosse raised the question, too, for the report of his lecture is skimpy as a ghost. But what is the truth of a dead man's being? How are we to get at the reality of his nature among all that jumble of contradictions, inconsistencies, uncertainties, and baffled desires? Take the simple and universal case of health alone. We would not fall into the heresy of the Manichæans, and separate body and soul as light from darkness; as in a Catholic marriage, the two are not to be divorced, being intermingled in one person. Certainly we must take account of the body with its strength or frailty, its endurance or collapses, its good circulation, which is happiness, its powerful digestion, which is will. But at once we are faced with the doubt whether the truth we are seeking is to be found only in health, or whether we must take account of sickness, too. The man we study will probably have been entirely different if ill, or if well; and the difference may have depended just on the change of a wind that blows as it lists. We should naturally choose the state of health for our discovery, but then we come upon men of high distinction whose life is a long disease, and we come upon others whose genius disappears when sanity breaks out again, as the soldier said of peace.

Shall we then catch the truth of a man's existence by describing every recorded side of his character, and every phase of his moods—good and bad, powerful and weak, healthy and sick together? The world would not contain the books that might then be written, and, though we outdid the hypnotists in the subdivision of the various kinds of self, or evoked qualities from the region

of dreams, no mortal would be the wiser. For the truth we seek is not a jungle of contradictions, but a clear prospect to be apprehended. Through want of time or sympathy or interest, we judge our fellows by a working rule of thumb. We know we can depend on one man's honesty or another's courage, while it is useless to expect action from this man, or eloquence from that, or politeness from a third. But the men themselves are probably quite unaware of their gifts or limitations. To self all things seem possible, and the brave man knows he might have run away, the coward that he might have stopped. Self will not tolerate the sense of limit, either in the way of good or evil. You may praise a man's imagination as celestial, but if you imply a want of arithmetical accuracy, he is hurt. Congratulate him on his careful sobriety, and next day he will drink the gutters of Bohemia. Commend a woman for her light and charming form, but if you add that the Venus of Milo measures so many more cubic inches in substance, you will not increase her favor. Rise to ecstasy over a poet's verse, but if you suggest that Homer might have written differently, he will think you jealous.

What, then, is the biographer to do? In this tangle of unlimited possibilities, where is he to find the clue of personality—the real self which suffers or creates all these varying and contradictory actions, moods, or emotions, and in the end, as it were, strings them together and sums them up into what is called its life? The difficulty is increased by the biographer's own nature, for that brings into play another spirit of unlimited capacities and a character of its own. In a portrait gallery the works of the same painter all have a strong family likeness, though they may represent people of entirely different temperaments. You may say of a living woman she looks like a Gainsborough, or a Romney, or even like a Lely, meaning she is like the aspect of the painter's own mind. And so in biography, the writer plays his part, nor is his light dry, but moist with personality. If Boswell has no second in biography, Carlyle still comes in sight, superb as Tacitus in phrase, endowed with passionate sympathy and a fearless penetration. Yet he is himself his own portraits; his soul speaks in his Cromwell, and between his Cromwell and his Frederick the Great there is the resemblance of brothers, though they had no two points in common, except, perhaps, the management of cavalry on the field. Macaulay thought it was Boswell's folly that put him first as a biographer and all the rest nowhere. "If he had not been a great fool, he would never have been a great writer," he says, in that striking, slap-dash way of his; it was "because Boswell was a dunce, parasite, and a coxcomb that he became immortal." Well, we know it is not true, but perhaps a certain humility of disposition—a colorless neutrality, not anxious to impress itself and its own value into the picture—might help the biographer towards the truth so difficult to reveal.

If we wanted to suggest a further difficulty still, we might remember that the ideal formed of a man during his lifetime reacts upon himself, and he becomes what other people think he is. Knowing his reputation as a wit and a bear, Johnson became more witty and more bearish. Knowing the popular esteem for his melancholy, Byron put on desperation like a garment. Knowing how highly his friends valued his courage, Tartarin crossed the sea. But, indeed, if we go on like this, we shall terrify future biographers from attempting their task at all, and then, about once in a hundred years, the world will be the loser. We must admit that what we really want is difficult to find. We are sure that when Mr. Gosse demands the truth and nothing but the truth, he would admit that, too. As was noticed lately in these columns in reference to a new biography of Sir Philip Sidney, it is not often, in speaking of a man's life, that we can say, "There is the man himself; there is the essential spirit, burning, though only for a moment, with pure flame, while all the rest, though it last for years, is mere twilight, clotted obscurity, or the unenumerated hours of sleep." It is not often, but in a biography that is worth writing at all, the moment may occur once or even twice, and there, perhaps, we shall find the real

truth—"la vérité vraie"—that we and Mr. Gosse so much desire.

A week ago the members of the Thames Valley Legitimist Club were hanging a memorial wreath on the equestrian statue of Charles I. near Charing Cross. We do not belong to the Club ourselves, and are ignorant of the motives that impel inhabitants of the Thames Valley thus to expose their lives to risk of the hideous penalties inflicted on High Treason. But it can hardly be the Royal martyr's falsity, blindness, and family life that they commemorate, though in a biography of Charles all those things would have to come in as part of the truth. It is probably Van Dyck's pathetic portraits that stir their blood; or it is that verse of Andrew Marvell's. The reproachful look of passive dignity—those few minutes before death during which a king did nothing common or mean, appear to reveal the inner truth, the essential reality of the man, far more clearly than either loyal panegyrics or the detractions of the learned. Similarly, great biographer though Lockhart was, how chilly and uninforming is the elaborate conclusion in which he analyses the character of Scott! Let us but recall a few of those frigid sentences:—

"The grand virtue of fortitude, the basis of all others, was never displayed in higher perfection than in him; and it was, as perhaps true courage always is, combined with an equally admirable spirit of kindness and humanity. His pride, if we must call it so, undebased by the least tincture of mere vanity, was intertwined with a most exquisite charity, and was not inconsistent with true humility. . . . He was a patient, dutiful, reverent son; a generous, compassionate, tender husband; an honest, careful, and most affectionate father."

It smells of mortality and the chancel slab. With what relief we turn to our old friend: "Affliction sore Long time she bore!" But if we would have the true Scott, there are those last words he said to the same Lockhart: "My dear, be a good man. Nothing else will give you any comfort when you come to lie here." Or, better still, there is that saying of his son's, who wondered why so many famous people came to visit his father, but supposed it was because he was always the first to see a sitting hare.

When "Christopher North" died, Carlyle wrote of him, "John Wilson had much nobleness of heart, and many traits of noble genius, but the central tie-beam seemed always wanting." Perhaps it is, after all, that central tie-beam—the keystone, as we rightly say of an arch—that we really seek above all else in biography. The rest may be true enough, but apart from the keystone, it does not matter much. Unless all the bits of truth are bound together by the tie-beam, they do not matter at all; and if, like "Christopher North," the man had no tie-beam—well, life is short, and we can only pass him with the hope he may do better in heaven. We have only time for the essential, for the moments of clear flame, and those brief combinations of spirit when, as Abt Vogler says, out of three sounds are framed not a fourth sound but a star. So it is that when biographers, mumbling like ghouls the pitiful bones, produce for our edification "the truth" about this man or that, the world remains tolerantly indifferent. In its own vision it perceives a truer truth. Let the ghouls do their worst, the ideal of portraiture must still be preserved, and if there were no Shelley, youth would have to invent him.

ON PAN-CAKES AND PAN-PIPES.

ONE of those kind people who take the trouble to let a writer know when anything he has to say interests them said recently in a letter to the writer of these lines (*à propos* of something he had published), "the Bretons and Spaniards enjoy their festivals as a schoolboy eats a pan-cake, without even a remote thought of Pan." The recipient confesses that he was both startled and delighted by the suggestion of a connection, hitherto by him unsuspected, between Pan and pan-cakes. To him a Shrovetide pancake had been a pancake flat and round, and it had been nothing more. It had smelt of the frying-pan rather than of the fair humanities of old religion. Skeat derives pan-cake from "pan," not the

god, but the broad shallow vessel, the Latin "patina," the Low Latin "panna." But what is the truth about this? The idea seems too good not to be true. The tossing of the pancake performed in some places has all the air of some old-world sacred rite. What more fitting than that the sacred cake should be solemnly eaten in honor of Pan on the day of "Carne Vale," of farewell to the *joie de vivre*, at the close of festivities and merrymakings before the wintry weeks of Lent?

Pan falls asleep every winter, but we do not say "farewell" to him till the Christmas merriment is over, and even then (unlike the schoolboy mentioned above) we look forward to his vernal woodland waking, and so our Shrove Tuesday pancake becomes the pan-cake of a prophecy. There comes every year some one day when Pan, the deathless, wakes from sleep, when the dead earth is alive again, and once more becomes life-giving and satisfying. In days now vanished and consumed by Time, the writer lived in a dilapidated cottage, behind which stretched miles and miles of deep green woods. There is nothing in the world like a spring wood in South-country England. As one writes one smells the good smell of wood where the woodcutters are at work in a clearing in the dry, warm air. These woods were to all intents and purposes his own careless park and pleasure. Year after year he spent hours in them, day after day, all the long summer through. It was not quite "farewell my book and my devotion," but they were somewhat lazy pretexts for sauntering in that warm and still and solitary place. They were woods in which one might lose oneself—in which one never met another human creature, save now and again a game-keeper, or the wood-cutters at their work. Day after day each spring, one would ask the question, "Shall I try the woods to-day?" Sometimes one made the attempt too soon, only to be driven back by the chill, unkindly weather. But there always came some one day, when the winter spell was broken, and one felt again the old delight, the joy of the earth's waking. This was usually about the twenty-first of April. The last ten days in April and the first ten in May are the time of the fresh beauty of an English wood.

Long before that, of course, the primrose "ventures up," as Mr. Stephen Phillips says, and he is a poet, if but for that one word. It comes up, bud and stem and leaves all together, out of the earth, like the flower from an enchanter's pot, but it looks starved and stunted in the winds of March. By mid-April the stars are large and yellow on their long juicy stalks. One has no skill to tell of all the flowers, and cannot say which one loves best. The frail anemones in their shy clusters are the first venturers of all. How pure and gay they look when the one day comes! The orchises, with the strange mystical marks on their green leaves, bloom later on, in May, in their fresh beauty for a day or two, when the primroses are almost done. The different flowers had their haunts in different nooks and corners of the wood. One came now on primroses and anemones growing together, and now on violets. Here and there were banks of cowslips, and at the wood's farthest border a great sheet of bluebells. The flowers grew always best where there had been made a clearing in the wood the year before. One knows not what to speak of in the wood, or where to begin to praise. One thinks of the green woodland "rides," in spring, literally "primrose paths" which crossed one another in all directions. One remembers the bronze gold of the young oak-leaves, and the red and gilded oak-apples. One thinks, above all, of the silence, which made one long that tired town people might be bathed in it.

This silence was, for the most part, broken only by the noises of living creatures, by the notes of birds, and the whirr and rustle and hum of insects and furred and feathered and bristly things. These all knew the day of Pan's waking, and came to welcome him to his domain. Melissa knew when she would find the flowers. The sulphur-colored butterflies, flowers themselves, fluttered out the self-same day. As for the birds, the trees were green Towers of Babel. The wood was haunted by nightingales, and the cuckoo mocked all day. The summer nights were filled with the scream of the night-

jar. (It was pathetic, by the way, to hear a tired-looking woman, passing through the country of the wood in the train, say, one day in spring, "I should so like to hear the cuckoo—I haven't heard him once this year.") The long months of Pan's reign were happy ones for all the creatures of his woodland retinue. One saw, indeed, sad sights sometimes, say, a bright-winged jay, caught by the leg in a trap, fluttering and screaming. The writer came suddenly one day on a tree from the lowest branch of which hung the sleek, glossy bodies of seven freshly-killed moles—*Septem Fratrum Martyrum*.

Lent tells us that we are greater than and different from all the sensuous world of which we form part, and should rise above it. In summer it may re-absorb us, but in Lent hundreds and thousands honestly try to gain a certain amount of detachment from it. On the day of pancakes they bid it, for a time, farewell. What form should this farewell take? What is the best way to keep the carnival?

If the writer could choose his own way of spending Shrove Tuesday evening, the entertainment of his choice would be a beautiful and elaborate rendering of Hayden's "Toy Symphony." The performers would appear in their appropriate costumes. The drummer would be the "Joli Tambour" returning from the war, from whom the King's daughter, looking from her window, asked a rose. By the gallant boy would be a trumpeter, a little girl in white and gold, holding her trumpet to red lips in a grave, sweet, dead-white face, with long, straight, gold hair. The woodpecker would be in feathers, like the actors in "Chanticleer." The cuckoo would be, not a bird, but a voice, haunting the Symphony as he will haunt the wood when spring comes in, and a plot of beechen green would hide the nightingale. From a ripening wheat-field would come the strident cry of the corn-crake, calling up the very heat and stillness and fragrance of the summer night. The rattle would be twirled by a green-clad dancing wood-nymph, in the very ecstasy of spring. And, amid the performers of the Symphony, Pan himself would appear and disappear, giving forth from his pipes a music of piercing sweetness, the alluring, bewitching music of the sunburnt earth.

THE BEE IN WINTER.

At about the end of October, flower and bee bid one another good-bye for a long, cold, and dreary while. It will always be another flower that keeps the appointment—sallow catkin instead of hawkweed, red dead-nettle instead of rag-wort, colt's-foot instead of ivy bloom. Usually, it is a different bee, but the most worthy members of the bee tribe are wont to keep the rendezvous that they themselves as individuals have made. The great humble bees, unskilled misers, simply go fast to sleep, and forget everything till balmy March calls them. Their workers are all dead, and in the spring they must be their own workers till they can rear the first citizens of their new colony. But higher, because more efficient than they, the queen bee rests in her hive surrounded by a band of the same bees that did "stake boot upon the summer's velvet buds," or, at any rate, on the blossoms of early autumn. With store-houses and winter store, food and the apparatus for distilling the first nectar of spring, with her retainers and artificers, she sits, not asleep, not without carousing in her hall, facing the winter instead of ignoring it, watching for the dawn instead of passively awaiting a resurrection.

It was past the middle of last September when, for companionship and remembrance of summer days, we took our bees into the house. In Cyprus they habitually keep bees under the same roof as the dwelling-house. It must be pleasant to hear their murmur in the wall and exchange with them the confidences of the family and the city. It is a poor thing to let them stay out in the field as some do, far from the house, and often completely forgotten for weeks together in the depth of winter. Ours would have passed this winter in a skep in a cottage garden, which is almost as good as living in the cottage itself—if they had not been put in the

brimstone pit and sent to sleep for ever. There was not a bee moving on the 28th of September, the day when we called for the condemned bees. The next hive was sending out rare foragers, but this was as still as the grave. We thought there could be no bees in it, but when the hive was turned upside down, it proved to have a greater population than the other. We took but half of them and their young queen into our little hive of four half frames. We wished to see how small a lot would come through the winter, carefully treated.

In their new quarters, the bees that had thought to have finished their summer's work awoke into new activity. A change will always so energise the bees, and some beekeepers use the fact to get the utmost yield of honey from a hive. Ours, though living in the room, were given flight under the window-sash till the end of October. Till the end of September they worked every day, some of them that had evidently discovered a bed of balsam somewhere, coming home like dusty millers. At the same time, they were taking syrup through the top of the hive and storing it at the rate of nearly half a pint a day. The wise beekeeper finishes his feeding before the end of September. It has not only to be stored, but medicated, by the bees, and capped before it can be a safe stand-by for winter use. The production of wax, even for capping, must be a wearing process. The handful of bees in our little hive only twice got up the wax-producing temperature, which seems almost like that of boiling water, and when they had taken some four pounds of syrup they ceased to take more. Towards the end of October they gave no signs of life for three or four days at a stretch, and then, on a fine day, would come out and fly round in a cloud for exercise, while even so late as October 14th one or two of them came home with signs of having visited the balsam blossoms. So much had they been awakened by transfer from their cottage skep to a frame hive in London.

At the end of October they had another change of locality, and at the same time were closed in the hive and kept entirely in the house. They stood upon a dressing-table, and were thus under close observation at shaving time. It was high time for them to be asleep, or at any rate to stay entirely at home. For the most part, the only sign of life was the daily conveyance of a little chipped wax and other debris to the furthest limit of the porch. Sometimes the little scavenger of the day could be seen at its brief work. A week or two later there was sometimes the body of a dead sister to be brought out, and when these grew to an average of two a day the bee-master had anxious moments. Sometimes, so quiet and without sign was the community, he thought they must all be dead; but the next inspection would prove them alive and well.

The bee books tell us that a hive must have for its winter sustenance from twenty to twenty-five pounds of honey. It is further stated that a few bees consume as much as twice their number, the problem being to convert so much sugar into heat as will keep the temperature of the hive habitable. Ours, which at first had seemed a solid hive full, scarcely covered in October one full frame. The four pounds of syrup they stored before November was nearly gone by December 12th. They had been living on this as well as storing it for ten weeks, which gives them little more than half a pound a week, or only twelve or fourteen pounds for a six months' winter. In the cold weather the stores went even more slowly than that. When they had finished the syrup, we gave them candy, of which they consumed half a pound in thirteen days. Then we moved them out of doors, the double-walled nucleus hive standing within a full-sized hive, also double-walled. They had cold weather, then a week of extraordinary mildness, when they came out quite busily, then fierce frost. Their first half-pound of candy out of doors lasted them more than twenty-four days, or at the rate of no more than seven pounds for the winter. There was, we are informed, not more than six pounds of honey in the skep whence our bees were taken, the swarm being a late one, and last summer disastrous from the honey point of view. On the twenty-four pound basis, then, thousands of skeps must prove tenantless

this spring, for the cottager seldom gives artificial food. Or have bees the unsuspected faculty of apportioning a short supply so as to make it go as far as a superabundance? The great strain upon the stores comes, of course, when the young brood is being fed; but we claim to have proved, by summer experiment, that less than a quarter of a pint of syrup a day and a pinch of peafLOUR will keep a comb of brood. It is likely that in a good year the honey bee is self-supporting from the time of full fallow blossom onward.

The bee's great peril in winter is a sudden chill on a tempting day. Our bees were so clamorous to come out that on November 2nd, November 30th, and December 23rd we took them from the dressing-room and opened the hive on a warm window-sill. They chose safe days, and only flew for the few necessary moments. But once, when it was very cold outside, a few of them escaped in the room, and we had to catch them one by one and put them back. When one flew against the window, it dropped as though shot, and lay motionless where it fell. So do they fall when, venturing out on the wrong day, a drop of cold rain falls on them in full flight. If you take them up and put them in some warm place, as under the quilt of the hive above the cluster, they will miraculously come to life again. We wished to be so careful of each unit that we frequently revived our "dead" bees. Even those that had been hauled out to the porch by the undertaker-scavenger would return to life and go back to the cluster. In most cases, however, they shortly died again, and that time beyond recall. But our winter bees had been so sweet in life that they were like the holy ones who see not corruption. Their bodies did not even stiffen; under the microscope they were always like newly killed insects. We had a sneaking belief that in the sunshine of spring they would revive and take up their work again like young bees.

Those who keep vigil in the hive are always awake. A few are more awake than the others, some to broach the honey cells and feed the others, which take the nourishment almost automatically, some to keep the hive clean, others to fan a little when the state of ventilation demands it. Some say that the queen is the most alive member of the community, and even that she keeps the others awake. We have not found it so. Her serenity seems at least equal to that of her semi-sisters. But in this respect, no doubt, there are personal differences. An old queen may have a St. Vitus-like fidgetiness, constantly peering into cells, as though about to begin laying. The healthy queen forgets all about such things till the first bit of outside pollen or the peafLOUR substitute of the artful bee-master bids her once more be fruitful and multiply.

Short Studies.

THE CHOICE.

SOME years ago in Chelsea there used to stand at the crossing of a street leading to the Embankment an old man, whose living was derived from the cleanliness of boots. In the intervals of plying his broom, he could generally be seen seated on an upturned wooden box, talking to an old Irish terrier, who belonged to a house near by, and had taken a fancy to him. He was a Cornishman by birth, had been a plumber by trade, and was a cheerful, independent old fellow, with ruddy cheeks, grey hair and beard, and little, bright, rather watery, grey eyes. But he was a great sufferer from a variety of ailments. He had gout, and some trouble in his side, and feet that were like barometers in their susceptibility to weather. Of all these matters he would speak to us in a very impersonal and uncomplaining way, diagnosing himself, as it were, for the benefit of his listeners. He was, it seems, alone in the world, not having, of course, in those days, anything to look forward to in the way of a pension, nor, I fancy, very much to look back on, except the death of his near relatives and the decline of the plumbing trade. It had

declined him for years; but, even before a long illness ousted him in favor of younger men, he had felt very severely the palpable difference in things. In old days plumbing had been a quiet, steady business, in which you were apparently "on your own, and knew where you were"; but latterly "you had just had to do what the builders told you, and, of course, they weren't going to make allowances. If you couldn't do the job as fast as a young man, out you went, and there you were." This long illness, and the death of his wife coming close together (and sweeping away the last of his savings), had determined him, therefore, to buy a broom and seek for other occupation. To sweep a crossing was not a profession that he himself would have chosen before all others; still, it was "better than the 'house, and you were your own master." The climate in those days not being the most suitable for a business which necessitated constant exposure to all elements but that of fire, his ailments were proportionally active; but the one remarkable feature of his perpetual illness was that he was always "better" than he had been. We could not at times help thinking that this continual crescendo of good health should have gradually raised him to a condition of paramount robustness, and it was with a certain disappointment, in the face of his assurances, that we watched him getting, on the contrary, slowly stiffer and feebler, and noted the sure increase of the egg-like deposits, which he would proudly have us remark, about his wrists and fingers.

He was so entirely fixed and certain that he was "going in the river" before he went "in the 'house," that one hesitated to suggest that the time was at hand when he should cease to expose himself all day and every day. He had evidently pondered long, and with a certain deep philosophy, on this particular subject, and fortified himself by hearsay.

"The 'house ain't for a man that respects himself," he would say. And, since that was his conviction, such as respected themselves could not very well beg him to act against it. At the same time, it became increasingly difficult to pass him without wondering how much longer it would be before he finally sought shelter in the element of water which was so apt to pour down on him day by day.

It is uncertain whether he discussed this matter of the river *versus* the 'house with the dog, to whom he was always talking, but that there was a certain fellow-feeling between them on the subject of exposure and advancing age is more than probable; for, as he would point out: The poor old feller's teeth were going, and the stiffness across his loins was always worse when it was wet. In fact, he was afraid that the old dog was gettin' old! And the dog would sit patiently for an hour at a time looking up at him, trying to find out, perhaps, from his friend's face, what a dog should do when the enemy weighed on him till he could no longer tolerate himself, not knowing, of course, that kindly humans would see to it that he did not suffer more than a dog could bear. On his face, however, with its grizzled muzzle and rheumy eyes thus turned up, there was never a sign of debate; it was full of confidence that, whatever decision his friend came to in this momentous question between the river and the 'house would be all right, perfectly satisfactory in every way to dogs and men.

One very rainy summer our old friend, in a burst of confidence, disclosed the wish of his heart. It was that he might be suffered to go down once more to Fowey, in Cornwall, where he had been born, but had not seen for fifty years. By some means or other the money was procured for this enterprise, and he was enabled to set off by excursion train for a fortnight's holiday. He was observed, the day before his start, talking at great length to the dog, and feeding it out of a paper bag with caraway-seed biscuits. A letter was received from him during his absence, observing certain strange laws of caligraphy, and beginning "Honoured Sir and Lady." It was full of an almost passionate description of a regatta, of a certain "Joe Petherick" who had remembered him, of the "lulvy weather," and other sources of his great happiness, and ended "Yours truley

obedient." On the fifteenth day he was back at his corner, seated on his box in the pouring rain, saying that he was "a different man, ten years younger, and ready to 'go' now any day"; nor could anything persuade him from the theory that Heaven had made a special intervention on his behalf. But only four days later, the sun being for once in the heavens, he was so long in answering a salutation that we feared he had been visited by some kind of stroke; his old face had lost color, it seemed stiff, and his eyes had almost disappeared.

Inquiry elicited from him the information that he was better than he had been, but that the dog was dead. They had put it away while he had been gone, and he was afraid that he should miss the "faithful old feller."

"He was very good to me," he said; "always came for a bit of bread or biscuit. And he was company to me; I never knew such a sensible creature." He seemed to think that the dog must have pined during his absence, and that this had accelerated his end by making his owners think he was more decrepit than he really was.

The death of the dog, and the cold, damp autumn that year, told heavily on the old man; but it was not till mid-November that he was noted one morning absent from his post. As he did not reappear, his lodging was sought out. It was in a humble street, but the house was neat and clean, and the landlady seemed a good, rough woman. She informed us that our old friend was laid up with "pleurisy and the gouty rheumatics"; that by rights, of course, he ought to be in the infirmary; but she didn't like to turn him out, though where she would get her rent from she didn't know, to say nothing of his food, because she couldn't let him starve while there he was cryin' out with the pain, and no one but herself to turn a hand to him, with his door open at the top of the house, where he could holler for her if he wanted. An awful independent old feller, too, or else she wouldn't hesitate, for that was where he ought to be, and no mistake, not having a soul in the world to close his eyes; and that's what it would come to, though she would never be surprised if he got up and went out to-morrow, he was that stubborn!

Leaving her to the avocations which we had interrupted by coming in, we went on up the stairs.

The door of the back room at the top was, as indeed she had led us to suppose, open, and through it the sound of our old friend's voice could be heard, travelling forth:—

"O Lord God, that took the dog from me, and gave me this here rheumatics, help me to keep a stiff and contrite heart. I am an old man, O Lord God, and I am not one to go into *that place*. So God give me a stiff heart, and I will remember you in my prayers, for that's about all I can do now, O God. I have been a good one in my time, O Lord, and cannot remember doing harm to any man for a long while now, and I have tried to keep upsides with it; so, good Lord, remember and do not forget me, now that I am down, a-lying here all day, and the rent goin' on. For ever and ever, O Lord. Amen."

We allowed a little time to pass before we went in, unwilling that he should think we had overheard that prayer. He was lying in a small dingy bed, with a medicine bottle and glass beside him on an old tin trunk. There was no fire.

He was—it seemed—better than he had been; the doctor's stuff was doing him good.

Certain arrangements were made for his benefit, and in less than three weeks he was back again at his corner.

In the spring of the following year we went abroad, and were absent several months. He was no longer at his post when at last we came back, and a policeman informed us that he had not been there for some weeks. We made a second pilgrimage to his lodgings. The house had changed hands. The new landlady was a thin, anxious-looking young woman, who spoke in a thin, anxious voice. Yes, the old man had been taken very ill—double pneumonia and heart disease, she thought. Anyway, she couldn't have the worry and responsibility

of him, let alone her rent. She had had the doctor, and had him taken off. Yes, it had upset him a bit; he would never have gone if he'd had his choice; but, of course, she had her living to get. She had his bits of things locked up all right; he owed her a little rent. In her opinion, he'd never come out again. She was very sorry for him, too; he'd given no trouble till he was took ill.

Following up her information, we repaired with heavy hearts to the 'house which he had so often declared he would never enter. Having ascertained the number of his ward, we mounted the beautifully clean stairs. In the fifth of a row of beds our old friend was lying, apparently asleep. But, watching him carefully, we saw that his lips, deep sunk between his frosty moustache and beard, were continually moving.

"He's not asleep," said the nurse; "he'll lie like that all the time. He frets."

At the sound of his name he had opened his eyes, which, though paler and smaller and more rheumy, were still almost bright. He fixed them on us with a peculiar stare, as much as to say: "You've taken an advantage of me, finding me here." We could hardly bear that look, and hurriedly asked him how he was. He tried to raise himself, and answered huskily that he was better than he had been. We begged him not to exert himself, and told him how it was that we had been away, and so forth. He seemed to pay no attention, but suddenly said: "I'm in here; I don't mean to stay. I'll be goin' out in a day or two." We tried to confirm that theory, but the expression of his eyes took away one's power of comfort, and made one ashamed of looking at him. He beckoned us closer.

"If I'd a-had the use of my legs," he whispered, "they'd never have had me. I'd a gone in the river first. But I don't mean to stay—I'm goin' back home."

The nurse told us, however, that this was out of the question; he was still very ill.

Four days later we went again to see him. He was no longer there. He had gone home. They had buried him that morning.

JOHN GALSWORTHY.

The Drama.

FROM GRIM TO GAY.

MR. H. B. IRVING'S performance of "Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde" entirely conquered an at first somewhat recalcitrant spectator. The opening act seemed to me heavy and unpromising. Mr. Comyns Carr has not quite done himself justice in the dialogue, which is curiously stiff, conventional, and old-fashioned—the dialogue of an Adelphi play of 1850. I cannot but think that even now this would be worth amending. A few judicious touches would take the starch out of the conversation. As it is, the party of men in Dr. Jekyll's library never for a moment resemble any real dinner party in Harley Street or anywhere else. But this conventionality of tone and treatment was not the only thing that troubled me. After Mr. Irving's first transformation from Jekyll into Hyde, I felt that he had not overcome the inherent difficulty of the theme—namely, the difficulty of differentiating Hyde from Jekyll without making him such a fantastic monstrosity that no one could ever have accepted him as a normal human being. Jekyll's friends, in the first act, talk of Hyde with disapproval and suspicion, indeed, but not otherwise than they might talk of any other disagreeable and sinister personage; whereas, when Hyde is finally presented to us, we feel that such a horrible Caliban could never have been thought or spoken of except as a loathsome freak of nature—a thing to be bottled away in

spirits of wine. This difficulty was apparent in the late Richard Mansfield's performance, which had the additional disadvantage of being just as incredible in the Jekyll as in the Hyde incarnation. Mr. Irving's Jekyll is, of course, as dignified and austere as heart can desire; but when he changes into Hyde one feels that any possible plausibility in the action is gone, and that Jekyll's friends would certainly take strong measures if he was thought to be making a crony and confidant of a monster from a caravan.

This objection is, and remains, real. It is probably not within the resources of art to effect instantaneously such a change in a human personality as to render it unrecognisable, without at the same time making it grotesque. Mr. Irving's Hyde, in other words, is not prosaically and literally credible. But when once we have got over and accepted this fact, the power and horror of the thing quickly take hold of us. As the second act went on, I recognised the remarkable ingenuity of Mr. Comyns Carr's manipulation of the theme; and in the scene of the murder of Sir Danvers Carew, the requisite shivers began to run down my spine. The end of this act is surely not well arranged. The parallel bodies stretched on the floor are a trifle comic; and Lady Carew might certainly attain a better effect by merely shrinking appalled from her husband's corpse than by doing the conventional swoon. It is in the third act, however, that Mr. Irving's triumph comes. The agony of Jekyll in the first scene is finely portrayed; and the second scene, in Hyde's lodging, is a passage of grisly intensity worthy of the actor's father at the very summit of his power. I do not hesitate to say that Sir Henry Irving, master of the uncanny as he certainly was, never did anything more truly and irresistibly terrible than this. Mr. H. B. Irving has hitherto shown great ability in reproducing some of his father's achievements; but here he "goes one better" with no model to work upon. And the fourth act keeps well up to the level of the third. The whole performance is a masterpiece of the gruesome. Why one should take pleasure in the sensation of centipedes running up and down one's back is a curious question in æsthetics which at this moment I do not propose to examine. But the fact is patent and familiar; and lovers of the creepy may be assured that nothing creepier than Mr. Irving's performance has been seen in our time. Its merit does not end here, however. There is something really tragic and profoundly moral in the struggle of Dr. Jekyll against the recurrent and irresistible invasions of the bestial nature which he has incautiously allowed to concentrate and organise itself within him. Mr. Irving may be congratulated on having done, not only a gruesome, but a fine and memorable thing. One word of warning, however—he must beware of letting hereditary mannerism creep upon him. It would be a thousand pities if, through the very popularity this performance is pretty sure to attain, the Hyde in his artistic composition should gradually gain the upper hand of the Jekyll.

There are few things more difficult than to hit the just tone in writing of such a play as "The O'Flynn" at His Majesty's. To take it seriously is impossible; to dismiss it with contempt would be inhuman. It is an adroit, innocent, agreeable entertainment, without the smallest intellectual pretensions, but not without a pleasant literary savor, if only in the reminiscences it awakens. In describing it as "an original play derived from many sources," Mr. J. H. McCarthy resorts to the plea known in law, I believe, as "confession and avoidance." He has produced one of those shimmering patchworks of romantic frippery in which, ever since the days of "The Ballad-Monger," Sir Herbert Tree loves to drape himself. Scott, Hugo, Dumas, Gautier, Rostand—these are some of the collaborators whom Mr. McCarthy has taken unto himself—and a very pleasant company they are. How does his hero make his first entrance? Why, down the chimney, like Don César in "Ruy Blas." When the heroine drops in promiscuous-like to lunch at Wolf's Crag—I mean Castle O'Flynn—has not the hero his Caleb Balderstone to hand, in the person of his seneschal, Conacher O'Rourke?

What shall he do with the two bailiffs who happen to be in possession? Evidently he must take a leaf out of Goldsmith's book, and introduce them as noblemen and his friends. A little later, a suggestion is borrowed from Sheridan, and the process-servers, in the character of lackeys, take their place behind the hero's chair. Then the O'Flynn, like Cyrano de Bergerac, must be a fluent improviser; he must perform extravagances of self-sacrifice to save his lady-love a moment's pain; he must fight a duel, not, indeed, while improvising a ballade, but while drinking a bowl of punch; and at the last mouthful he must pink his man—"à la fin de l'envoi je touche." So we skip merrily from reminiscence to reminiscence; but the chief collaborator, as I learn from the "Times"—the contributor of by far the largest patch—would seem to be Théophile Gautier in "Le Capitaine Fracasse." The groundwork of the plot we may take to be Mr. McCarthy's own, and it is sufficient, if not particularly brilliant. It provides a number of picturesque scenes, and gives us, to balance the harum-scarum hero, a frank, amiable, womanly heroine. One or two of the scenes are extremely well put on. The picture presented by the Isle of Cyprus tavern during the colloquy of the two villains is quite unusually good. What an advantage villains possess in being able to dispense with limelight! The scene in Dublin Castle, too, is gay and effective. Altogether, the eye is gratified and the imagination pleasantly amused.

One or two of my colleagues, I observe, think the part of O'Flynn unsuited to Sir Herbert Tree. I should say, on the contrary, that he had seldom found a part more congenial to his humor or accordant with his methods. He plays it with buoyancy and infectious enjoyment; and he will presently be able to give it that little acceleration of pace which alone it lacks. The whole performance is competent in its kind. Mr. Henry Ainley and Mr. William Haviland are excellent as a polished and a sinister villain respectively; Mr. W. G. Fay is quite delightful as the Irish Caleb Balderstone; Mr. Edward Sass makes a clever grotesque of a bibulous Dutch General, and Mr. Hubert Carter is good as a heavy tragedian. Miss Evelyn D'Alroy has never been seen to greater advantage than in the part of the heroine, and Miss Auriol Lee shows tact and skill as a pert soubrette.

Mr. Lewis Waller deserves the greatest credit for having produced "The Strong People," by Mr. C. M. S. McLellan. It is not quite the great play it sets out to be, but it is extremely interesting and able. In Mr. McLellan's nature, the thinker and the playwright do not quite run in harness. They are apt to get in each other's way. The playwright cannot express the thinker's meaning, and when the thinker takes the stage, the playwright has to stand aside and mark time. Thus we have in "The Strong People" a powerful labor play of an old-fashioned type, but showing considerable ingenuity of invention, placed in an atmosphere of ideas which, though not precisely irrelevant, are too vague and high-flown to seem much to the purpose. At the same time there is real merit in both aspects of the play, which may, perhaps, be best described as a symbolical melodrama. The situations are strong and interesting, and the dialogue abounds in suggestive phrases and points of view; for instance:—

"The common man loves two things—himself and a woman. As for the truth, he hates it."

"When the madness for dying comes, it's stronger than the madness for living."

"Wherever there's a strong man, saviour or scourger, I back him to carry the world forward."

The general idea of the play, as I decipher it, is a very true one: namely, that half the ills of life arise from our failure to reduce material and moral values to terms of happiness, which, in a just acceptation, is the only real standard. Viewed as an exposition of this thesis, even the dramatically feeble last act is not without its value. The play is remarkably well acted by Mr. Lewis Waller, Mr. Lyn Harding, Mr. Guy Standing, Mr. A. E. George, and Miss Dorothy Dix.

WILLIAM ARCHER.

Communications.

THE LABOR PARTY AND THREE-CORNER CONTESTS.

To the Editor of *THE NATION*.

SIR,—The position of the Labor Party at the end of the elections deserves separate consideration because this newest of Parliamentary combinations being itself a combination of groups, its actual strength is most often miscalculated, and because the relations of Labor and Liberalism in the near future present one of the most difficult and urgent of the problems with which the progressive forces in the country are now faced. The numbers of Liberals and Tories in the new House of Commons will almost exactly balance. Outside these two main bodies, lie the Nationalists and the Labor Party, both independent in constitution and ultimate aims, both cordially supporting the Government for the present, but very different in that the Irish are concentrated upon a single object lying largely outside the sphere of British interests, while the Labor Party is almost exclusively British, and competes directly with Liberal candidates for the popular vote, both in the large towns and in the industrial counties.

Free Trade, the Budget, and the campaign against the Lords have postponed what might have been in many constituencies a disastrous competition; and have given a breathing-time in which the future may be calmly considered. It is pretty certain that this defensive and preliminary work of democracy will occupy several years to come. If the time be used wisely, something at least of future trouble may be avoided. But there are two postulates. Neither Liberalism nor Labor can sacrifice its independence; and, if there is to be any accommodation, there must be give-and-take on both sides. There will be six or seven Liberal M.P.'s to every Labor deputy; but the Labor vote in Parliament is necessary, and the permanence of the Labor Party—although it has had the worst of luck in securing fewer Members for a large increase of votes—may be taken for granted. In the last House, it numbered forty-five members (including two of the miners' group); it now numbers forty. The main body of the miners' representatives were to sit on the Labor benches after the General Election. In all, there were seventy-eight Labor candidates, including twenty-six of the miners' list. Of these forty have been successful and thirty-eight unsuccessful.

Both successes and failures are exceedingly strongly marked. The men returned, especially the old leaders of the party (and it is remarkable that there are only three or four new recruits), have majorities which actually average nearly 3,500 votes. The men who have failed are very often left far behind. This fact points clearly to the practical spirit of the industrial constituencies—to the great popularity of the Labor men where success is certain, and to the determination of the working-masses not to risk giving away seats to the worst of their enemies. It may be said—and the figures in the constituencies where one Liberal and one Labor man have been successful against two Tories prove it—that Labor has polled thousands of Liberal votes. On the other side, it may be said, with equal truth, that Liberalism is always polling Labor votes, and that, throughout the country in constituencies lacking Labor candidates, the Labor organisations have worked as effectively as any against the common enemy. It is at least possible, for instance, that the 2,000 branches of the Independent Labor Party have done as much to keep the North true to Free Trade and the rights of the House of Commons as all the other agencies concerned.

Yet the Labor Party has lost nearly a half of its candidates, though they were chosen, as it was believed, in a conservative spirit with a view to avoiding unnecessary loss on the popular side. If we examine their failures, we shall find that, of thirty-eight, only ten occurred in straight fights with Tories. This, in itself, would be a smaller proportion of loss than that suffered by the Liberals in straight fights. But now we face the essential fact of the situation. In seventy-eight contests there were twenty-eight failures in three-cornered fights, and in twenty-three of the twenty-eight cases, the Labor man was at the bottom of the poll. At first sight, to Liberal readers, this will appear to

be a fact for Labor men alone to reckon with. In reality, it demands equal attention from both sides, firstly, because any aggravation of feeling between the two sections must react most injuriously upon the situation throughout the country, and, secondly, because, in these twenty-eight three-cornered disasters, the seat was handed over to the Tories in five cases (not including Portsmouth and Preston), although in all these constituencies the Liberal and Labor votes combined were in a majority over the Tory. That is to say, if, a month ago, the Labor candidate had withdrawn in half of these cases, and the Liberal in the other half, the anti-Lords majority, apart from the Irish, would be larger than it is by ten votes—a margin that may soon be by no means a negligible matter.

The question to be settled is whether, during what I have called the present defensive and preliminary stage of democracy, this sort of thing is to increase or to decrease. If it is to increase, then, indeed, the elements of popular government are in peril. But it can easily be decreased, without any prejudice to the independence of Labor, or the dignity of Liberalism, by an exercise on the part of the responsible organisations on either side of that common sense and give-and-take which, in fact, are already in operation among the rank and file.—Yours, &c.,

G. H. PERRIS.

February 1st, 1910.

Letters to the Editor.

THE COUNTY ELECTIONS.

To the Editor of *THE NATION*.

SIR,—I am surprised that one obvious reason for our losses in the agricultural constituencies seems never referred to. The party has practically kept county members in nearly continuous work at Westminster for ten months or more in 1906, 1908, and 1909, three years out of four.

It has been physically impossible for members to give the constant and specialised and localised attention to each town and village and almost each elector, which modern electioneering, unhappily perhaps, but most indubitably, demands. While we have been kept walking through the lobbies, our opponents have been attending three, four, perhaps six meetings a week, keeping a running or rather freely flowing demoralisation at smoking concerts and village dinners, and employing masquerading scoundrels by the hundred, with pockets full of money, to treat without disguise in the public houses, and to reel off falsehoods by the fathom about what they profess to have seen in Germany and other protectionist countries. These have been the agencies, and the tyrants who have told wretched laborers that for a shilling anyone can see at Somerset House how each man voted in any constituency.

Hirelings such as these, free beer, intimidation, and candidates whose sense of honor has grown so dim that they either knowingly or with carefully closed eyes let these infamies be carried on for their gain: that has been the course of the Tariff Reform campaign of the past four years, financed by Americanised syndicates of capitalist sharpers. Meanwhile, Liberal members have had to trudge lobbies, and leave organisation and political education to local workers, enthusiastic and loyal, but *not candidates* making a personal appeal, and to itinerant and no doubt devoted lecturers and speakers who did not treat or debauch the electors.

These facts must be recognised in the new schemes being started for giving hope and confidence, and stimulating better organisation among the rural electorate. One vivid illustration of the truth of this contention can be found in the all but universal fate of those M.P.'s who have acted as private secretaries to Ministers. I may be wrong, but my impression is that every one of those members, with the exception of two, and one of them an East London member, have been beaten, and badly beaten, at the polls.

I am old fashioned enough to think that the "private secretary" business has been gravely overdone. Ministers never, in old times, relied to the extent they do at present on such incessant personal help. It is in itself absurd, and has obviously ruined the chances of these members, who

could find no time for work in their constituencies, besides making the serious sacrifice of losing the free opportunity of winning their spurs independently in Parliament, by taking up and pushing subjects of their own, and so getting that personal distinction which means always hundreds of votes.

If the party position is to be kept up or improved, these points, as well as all the rest, must have their weight.—Yours, &c.,

FRANCIS A. CHANNING.

February 2nd, 1910.

To the Editor of *THE NATION*.

SIR,—I wish to emphasise the point made by your correspondent "Liberal" as regards the want of secrecy in the ballot. I can corroborate his statement that "though they cannot tell how any one individual has voted, they can tell how each (smaller) district has." I was perfectly astonished at this last election to see how easily this could be, and was, done.

Where the polling district is a small one, mostly the property of one landlord, and the landlord, as often happens, one of the counting agents, the latter can tell almost to a vote whether the pledges given have been kept or not; and, if not, it is not a difficult matter, in a small parish, to "spot" the most probable delinquents and then to bring pressure to bear.

I do not wonder, under these circumstances, which I understand are nothing new, that it is difficult to convince the rural voter that the ballot is really secret. I do not wonder that he says "they have ways and means of finding out." I do not wonder that he temporises and votes with the powers that be over him, instead of according to his beliefs and his conscience. I do not wonder that he is afraid to act otherwise, for he has probably already bought and paid for his experience.

The matter can be remedied, as suggested by "Liberal," either by opening the papers face down, and then mixing with other polling districts before discriminating, or by simply numbering, instead of naming, the boxes.

Until something of this kind is done, small hope of unbiassed electoral returns from the rural districts. It is a most important matter. Will not some of our newly-elected M.P.'s take it up?—Yours, &c.,

J. R. TOMLINSON.

Rye-field, Knutsford,
February 3rd, 1910.

To the Editor of *THE NATION*.

SIR,—In an article in your issue of January 22nd, I note the line of demarcation between North and South is very strongly insisted upon.

This has been fully justified by results during the present election.

I have worked in a very Tory constituency, and am amazed at the ignorance among the working classes, especially those engaged in agriculture. This ignorance is deplorable, and especially so when, in many instances, men were only too eager to hear and accept the truth about our Liberal politics. I do not despair of the South, if only men are persuaded that they will be supported and upheld by Liberals, when hard pressed by Tory landlords. We must promise them this, and educate them. Begin at once. We have no time to lose. Then, and then only, shall we bring the South into line with the North. In the meantime we must never lose hope.—Yours, &c.,

MARY FLORENCE COVENTRY.

Sutton, Surrey, February 2nd, 1910.

TARIFF REFORM AND THE ELECTORS.

To the Editor of *THE NATION*.

SIR,—It may interest your readers to know that, though the return of seven Tories out of the nine representatives might appear as if Liverpool was in favor of so-called Tariff Reform, such is by no means the case. At our Chamber of Commerce, largely composed of Conservatives, a resolution in favor of Free Trade was passed by a large majority. Most of our leading ship-owners are of the same opinion. Up to a few days before the election it appeared as if our party was going to succeed, and so serious did the position

appear that a meeting of 1,400 publicans was called and addressed by Mr. F. E. Smith, who urged each of them to use his influence on 10 electors—and they knew how—and then they would carry all the seats for the Conservative cause. This influence was used to the full, and, in addition, Mr. Gladstone, the respected chairman of the Mersey Docks Harbor Board, and a gentleman of great influence, wrote a letter in which he avowed himself a Free Trader, but advising those who were Conservatives, and others, to vote for the Tariff Reformers! This decided many of those on the fence. Notwithstanding all these factors, in a total poll of something over 63,000, we polled some 30,000 votes, and I am convinced of this—that, if a poll could be taken on this issue alone, it would be found that Liverpool was with all the great industrial centres of Lancashire, Yorkshire, and the North of England in the maintenance of our Free Trade system.—Yours, &c.,

EDWARD EVANS.

Liverpool, February 1st, 1910.

THE LORDS AND FINANCE.

To the Editor of *THE NATION*.

SIR,—The following quotation from an unimpeachable Conservative source is a useful instance of the way in which our unwritten Constitution has been taken for granted by other people than those whose business it is to record the exact legal letter of what can or cannot be done by the Houses of Parliament:—

"Money Bills always begin in the House of Commons, because the greatest part of the supplies are raised by the people; and for this reason the Commons will not allow the Lords to alter them."

It is from "The Curiosities of London and Westminster Described," one of Newbery's children's books, published in 1788, and forms part of a description of the House of Commons. Eighteenth century children certainly would have had nothing revolutionary offered to them by so respectable a firm of publishers, so that we must conclude that the quotation represents the normal opinion of the day.—Yours, &c.,

F. J. H. D.

January 24th, 1910.

THE CRISIS AND THE REFERENDUM.

To the Editor of *THE NATION*.

SIR,—The General Election which has now taken place has shown clearly, what was, indeed, well recognised before, viz., that it is quite impossible to determine accurately the points upon which the votes have been recorded on such an occasion. Not only have the issues themselves been so varied, but the motives which have brought together all the political influences which have united their forces in the endeavor to defeat the Liberal Government have been equally numerous. Fortunately, they have failed, and a majority of 120 is an unmistakable approval on the part of the country of the general policy of the Liberal Government as indicated by their work during the past four years and their intentions for the future, as plainly set forth by the Prime Minister in his speech at the Albert Hall and his address.

Now the predominant issue put to the electors by Mr. Asquith is that of the veto of the House of Lords, which has been made use of in such a manner of late years, that it has become impossible for a Liberal Government to undertake the responsibilities of office without its being taken from them.

How is that to be done? Doubtless there are several ways, some of which depend upon the exercise of the prerogative of the King, such as the creation of new peers, the summoning of a limited number, and others which will not commend themselves to many thoughtful men of all parties if they can be avoided.

Is there any other, which is consistent with the principle upon which our government is based, viz., the decision of the electors themselves? There certainly is, and although it is a short and easy road and may be called an innovation, that is no reason why it should not be adopted.

All the members of the House of Commons accept the democratic principle that the will of the people must deter-

mine the policy of the country, and the only justification advanced for the rejection of the Budget by the responsible leaders of the Unionist Party in the House of Lords was that the judgment of the nation must be given upon what they described as a revolutionary proposal, before they could be expected to accept it. Here, then, is common ground.

Let a measure be passed which shall give to the Government of the day the discretionary power of appealing to the country, not by means of a General Election, but by a referendum of the particular measure, when the two Houses of Parliament are at issue upon it. This would be taken upon the total number of votes given for or against and not the constituencies alone. I know there are many arguments that can be brought both *pro* and *con* in reference to the referendum as an abstract theory, but we are a practical people, and to secure the important, more than important, necessary result, on lines which shall be in harmony with the democratic principles of the nation, and provide a sure and certain way of ascertaining the judgment of the people, appears to me worthy of adoption even if it be an innovation.

—Yours, &c.,

W. H. SILK.

21, Salisbury Road, Moseley, Birmingham,
January 31st, 1910.

"THE DECENT CHURCH."

To the Editor of *THE NATION*.

SIR,—The article under this title in last week's *NATION* is very interesting. The writer finds a text for his subject in some recent ebullitions, notably in the Woolwich incident and in some country parson's proclamation. That the incumbents quoted are obscure does not matter. They serve (for the sake of argument) as representative of the Church. It is scarcely worth while to remind the writer that what distresses him in one or two humble clergy is the recognised and deliberate policy of ministers in the front line of Non-conformity. He need not examine the records of the Non-conformist rank and file, though a glance at the pages of "John Bull" would help him to understand what can be achieved even by common soldiers in the Liberal army. But he will certainly search in vain among the leaders of the Church of England for any partisan display in the way of speech or behavior which can compare with the demonstrations in which the leaders of the Free Churches excel. When he says, however, that "to celebrate Mr. Crooks's defeat was to triumph over the cause of the weak, to sound the loud timbrel over the destitute and oppressed," he must permit a reader to demur at his convenient assumption. It is so easy to introduce the righteous note and associate the opposite side with everything tyrannical, rapacious, and oppressive. But it is much easier to claim righteousness than to substantiate the claim.

It is fair to comment on the "decent quietness" of the Church, and show how this placid attitude is disturbed by such voices as those which the writer quotes, especially if the undignified utterances proclaim the wrong programme. It is fair also to criticise "religion without enthusiasm," though the records of the Church reveal what has been accomplished by quiet and patient work, carried through without fluster or fury. It is work that can be compared with the performances of many who shine in demonstration and revel in passionate declamation. But I venture to question the soundness of the writer's final jibe at the "Church of a Class," the "ignoble alliance" with wealth, and his amiable reproof, "it was to the poor that the Apostles were sent." Who live among the poor but the clergy of the Church of England? In the town parishes they are to be found, residing in the midst of the people. When various places of worship are abandoned, the Church remains in the slum districts. There are many just causes of complaint against "the decent Church," but it is still the Church that ministers to the poor.—Yours, &c.,

G. M. V. HICKEY.

St. Mark's Vicarage, Dukinfield, Cheshire,
February 1st, 1910.

[The Church in the towns does in a measure live with the people; but is that true, in anything like the same measure, of the Church in the country?—ED., *NATION*.]

ELECTORAL REFORM.

To the Editor of *THE NATION*.

SIR,—On February 16th, 1907, your predecessor, "The Speaker," published the successful essays in a competition—"The best suggestion for the Amendment of the Election Laws, with a view to Diminish Corrupt Practices and to cheapen the Cost of Election." As a prize-winner, I venture to send you again the summary of suggestions with which my essay concluded. I have been struck in reading the letters sent to you and to daily papers with regard to the conduct of last month's election, by the fact that a stringent Bill on the lines of these proposals—proposals almost echoed by the other prize-winner—would have gone far to remove the grounds of their complaints. Is it too much to hope for such a Bill in the new Parliament?

CORRUPT AND ILLEGAL PRACTICES.

A.—GENERAL.

1. A candidate shall be held responsible for the acts of any person (to include "woman") working in promotion of his candidature, and such person shall be held to be his agent, unless it can be proved that the work was undertaken without the knowledge or consent (a) of the candidate, (b) or of any of his authorised agents, (c) or any recognised association or club working in his interests.

2. Electoral offences shall be considered as offences against public order, and the magistrates shall be given power of summary jurisdiction in such cases.

B.—TREATING.

3. No political meetings shall be held on any licensed premises.

4. All licensed houses shall be closed on polling day.

C.—UNDUE INFLUENCE.

5. Under the definition of undue influence (Act of 1883, Sect. 2) shall be included the canvassing of tenants and workmen, by landlords, employers, or their agents. The addition might be in words to the following effect:—

"Whoever, directly or indirectly, by himself or any other person on his behalf, attempts to induce another person to vote or refrain from voting—such person being (a) in the occupation of any premises owned by the offender, or (b) employed by him for payment or the promise of payment."

6. The lending of any vehicle for the conveyance of voters to the poll shall be an illegal practice and shall void the election.

7. A polling station shall be provided in every elementary school district.

8. If any elector shall object to the continued presence of any person at or near the polling station during the hours of polling, the presiding officer shall require such person to leave the neighborhood of the polling station.

D.—EXPENDITURE.

9. The present authorised scale of expenditure shall be substantially reduced.

10. The expenses of the returning officer shall be defrayed out of public funds, subject to an audit by Government officials.

11. No expenditure on posters or placards shall be legal, except on (a) a reasonable number of copies of the election address, (b) notices of a reasonable number of public meetings, (c) notices by the returning officer connected with the conduct of the election.

12. Not more than two sets of election leaflets, &c., shall be sent from the committee rooms of any candidate to the electors during the course of the election, i.e., one set containing the election address, and one on the eve of the poll with instructions as to the place of voting.—Yours, &c.,

LIBERALIS.

February 2nd, 1910.

THE POPULARITY OF THE BUDGET.

To the Editor of *THE NATION*.

SIR,—In showing the effect of the Budget on the General Election votes in constituencies lost by Liberals at by-elections between 1906 and 1909—i.e., prior to the Budget's introduction—you omit the two seats won from Liberals by Labor and Socialist candidates. This would have been correct in dealing with a set-back to Tariff Reform,

but in their bearing upon the popularity of the Budget these two seats—Jarrow and Colne Valley—do, in fact, afford evidence more strikingly conclusive than can be obtained from any other results.

Both Jarrow and Colne Valley—as well shown by Mr. R. L. Outhwaite in the "Daily News" of October 25th, 1909—were lost by defections through disappointment at the Budget of 1907. Both seats were regained, in three-cornered contests, after the introduction of the more advanced Budget of 1909.

Jarrow in 1910 raised the Liberal from third place with 3,474 votes to first place with 4,885—an increase of 1,411 votes.

Colne Valley raised the Liberal from second place with 3,495 votes to first place with 4,741—an increase of 1,246 votes.

I had occasion to familiarise myself with all the contests in which Labor candidates have been concerned, and I do not hesitate to say that to the Budget, and the Budget alone, do the Liberals owe the remarkable way in which they have held their own, and even recovered lost seats, as at Haggerston, Jarrow, Colne Valley, and Lanark, in the three-cornered contests.—Yours, &c.,

January 31st, 1910.

AN ONLOOKER.

ONE MAN, ONE VOTE.

To the Editor of THE NATION

SIR,—Will you kindly permit me to give your numerous readers a personal example of how the present system of plurality voting affects the representation of the electorate of the United Kingdom?

I am not, I regret to say, engaged in any of the great commercial industries contributing to the wealth and prosperity of my native land. My income, all told, does not amount to £400 a year, derived from a very diminished property rental, yet I have been enabled, under the present conditions of a three weeks' polling, to record three votes in three different constituencies in Ireland—one in virtue of my occupancy of my residence in this city, and two as a freeholder in two county constituencies situate one hundred miles apart.

Had the polls for those constituencies been all taken on one day, I would have been deprived of the opportunity of recording my vote in one at least of the three. I would contrast with that state of affairs the position of a neighbor, who is a large employer of skilled labor, disbursing in wages £5,000 a year, and who is only entitled to exercise the franchise to the extent of one vote in respect of the house in which he resides.

Under such circumstances, is not the present system of Parliamentary representation indefensible?—Yours, &c.,

JUSTITIA.

Dublin, January 31st, 1910.

A FREE TRADE FIGHTING FUND.

To the Editor of THE NATION.

SIR,—Free Trade is again victorious. Specious promises of higher wages and cheaper living, even when personally guaranteed by the leaders of Tariff Reform, have failed to delude the workers of most of our great towns. By overwhelming majorities they have shown their contempt for Tariff Reform. Scotland, Wales, and the North of England have declared almost unanimously against Protection.

In this great victory the Free Trade Union can claim no small share. During the years 1906 and 1909, the Free Trade Union has carried on an incessant propaganda which culminated at the General Election in one of the most strenuous campaigns ever conducted since the days of Cobden. It has issued a monthly paper, "The Free Trader," and a very large number of publications, which are essential to every Free Trader who wishes to be armed against the fallacies of Tariff Reform. During the year 1908, the Union held 2,943 meetings and distributed 4,145,195 leaflets and pamphlets. In 1909 these numbers were increased to over 5,000 meetings, and no less than 16,255,000 leaflets and pamphlets were circulated.

The Union has lately employed fifty permanent agents in different parts of the country. These agents have carried out systematic and specialised campaigns. They have trained local speakers and workers, and in the recent contest over a thousand speakers were engaged on behalf of the Union. As soon as the General Election was announced, the Union increased the number of its local offices to 60, and from these offices conducted no less than 5,000 meetings and distributed over 20 million leaflets and pamphlets, and 250,000 posters.

Successful as our work has been, the officers and Committee of the Free Trade Union realise the fact that the fight for the maintenance of our Free Trade system is not nearly over yet. We

recognise that although Free Trade has more than held its own over the greater part of the field of battle, it can only retain its present ascendancy in the industrial centres by constant vigilance and ceaseless activity on the part of Free Trade workers. Free Traders are fully alive to the fact that periods of trade depression may render the very strongholds of our cause vulnerable to the attacks of the Tariff Reformers, who, having no definite cause to defend, adapt their policy to the particular interests in each locality.

But we have not only to defend what we already hold. If Free Trade is to gain a final victory over Tariff Reform, the ground which has been lost during the recent contest must be won back.

All Free Traders must view with great concern the apparent defection of the rural voter from the Free Trade cause.

For years past the agricultural laborer has been one of the most trustworthy supporters of Free Trade. The memory that Protection meant low wages and dear food has kept the laborer true to the principles of untaxed food.

Tariff Reformers have attacked existing revenue taxes levied on one or two articles of food and drink as an evil which they would remove. They have advocated protective taxes which they declare would be paid by the foreigner and would not increase the cost of living. We must expose the fallacy that commodities can become cheaper because they are taxed. We must do so in such a way as to make the truth obvious to the simplest mind. To accomplish this, occasional meetings are not enough. We must have a staff of Free Trade canvassers in every county, men and women who know their case, and who know the people, and who, in the cottages, in the fields, and in the lanes, can explain the great economic truths of Free Trade to the laborer and his wife, so that they will understand for all time. To do this work, the Free Trade Union must extend its forces in every direction.

We want to secure the best possible workers, and to commence the re-capture of the villages without a moment's delay.

This result can and will be secured, if Free Traders throughout the country are determined that it shall be. The present moment is the most vital period in the whole modern fiscal controversy.

Tariff Reform has twice suffered reverse at the polls. The great object which the Free Trade Union has in view is to secure a third victory for Free Trade, which, by including both town and country alike, shall be decisive. If the Union can secure a large annual augmentation of its funds, this crowning blessing for our people can be assured. To win Free Trade, Cobden raised £200,000. If we are to retain the untold boon which was then won for the British people, all Free Traders must be prepared to support the cause in a similarly generous manner. We earnestly appeal to Free Traders of all classes to assist us to the utmost within their power, even to the point of sacrifice, so that we may secure a fighting fund to enable us once and for ever to crush the conspiracy which seeks to gamble with the food of the people.

Full particulars of our plan of campaign will be forwarded to all subscribers who desire to become more fully acquainted with our work.

Contributions, both large and small, will be thankfully received, on behalf of the Free Trade Union, by either of the undersigned.

—Yours, &c.,

BRAUCHAMP,
ALFRED MOND,
Hon. Treasurers.

Free Trade Union,
8, Victoria Street, Westminster, S.W.
February 2nd, 1910.

Poetry.

OLD SUSAN.

WHEN Susan's work was done she'd sit,
With one fat guttering candle lit,
And window opened wide to win
The sweet night air to enter in;
There, with her thumb to keep her place,
She'd read, with old and wrinkled face,
Her mild eyes gliding very slow
Across the letters to and fro;
While wagged the guttering candle flame
In the wind that through the window came.
And sometimes in the silence, she
Would mumble a sentence audibly,
Or shake her head, as if to say,
"You silly souls, to act this way!"
And never a sound from night I'd hear,
Unless some far-off cock crowed clear;
Or her old shuffling thumb should turn
Another page; and rapt and stern,
Through her great glasses bent on me
She'd glance into reality;
And shake her round old silvery head,
With—"You—I thought you was in bed!"
Only to tilt her book again,
And rooted in Romance remain.

WALTER DE LA MARE.

The World of Books.

THE "NATION" OFFICE, THURSDAY NIGHT.

THE following is our weekly selection of books which we commend to the notice of our readers:—

- "Gambetta: Life and Letters." By P. B. Gheusi. (Unwin. 12s. 6d. net.)
 "The Working Faith of the Social Reformer and Other Essays." By Henry Jones, LL.D., D. Litt. (Macmillan. 7s. 6d. net.)
 "The Metamorphoses, or Golden Age of Apuleius of Madaura." Translated by H. E. Butler. (Clarendon Press. 2 vols. 3s. 6d. net each.)
 "The Bridling of Pegasus: Prose Papers on Poetry." (Macmillan. 7s. 6d. net.)
 "Louis XVIII." By Mary F. Sanders. (Hutchinson. 16s. net.)
 "Aspects of Christ." By the Rev. W. B. Selbie. (Hodder & Stoughton. 6s.)
 "Bound Together." By Mary E. Mann. (Mills & Boon. 6s.)
 "Agrippa d'Aubigné." Par S. Rocheblave. Les Grands Ecrivains Français. (Paris: Hachette. 2fr.)
 "La Duchesse de Duras et Chateaubriand." Par G. Pailhès. (Paris: Perrin. 7fr. 50.)
 "En Angleterre." Par Raymond Recouly. (Paris: Fasquelle. 3fr. 50.)
 "Paul le Normande." Roman. Par Jules Sageret. (Paris: Calmann-Lévy. 3fr. 50.)

THE Clarendon Press will shortly issue "Henry Fox, First Lord Holland: A Study of the Career of an Eighteenth Century Politician," by Mr. T. W. Riker, of Cornell University. The first Lord Holland has been painted in dark colors by historians. Macaulay calls him a needy political adventurer, and Lecky, after describing him as a man "of real ability and of indomitable courage," speaks in the strongest terms of the system of corruption which he fostered and by which he profited. Abraham Hayward claims for him "the very qualities most needed by a trading politician in corrupt, unsettled times," and adds, "it may safely be predicted that no arrangement or combination of his making was ever with his consent prevented or impeded by a principle." Holland had a dry wit which he used to advantage on occasion. He reproached Lord Bute for putting him off with a barony as a reward for his services, instead of the earldom for which he had stipulated. Lord Bute replied that it was only a pious fraud. "I perceive the fraud, my lord, but not the piety," was the answer. Again, when on his death-bed, he said to his servant, "If Mr. Selwyn calls again, let him in. If I am alive I shall be very glad to see him, if I am dead he will be very glad to see me." George Selwyn's "mortuary tastes" formed a frequent subject of banter among his friends.

THE biography of Lord Kelvin by Professor Silvanus Thompson, which Messrs. Macmillan are to issue this month, will present the great scientist under several aspects unfamiliar to the general reader. Very few people know, for instance, that Kelvin had a share in designing the "Dreadnought" type of battleship, or that he regarded the swift cruiser as more effective. The patent compass, which Kelvin invented, was offered to the Admiralty without any suggestion of payment, but received with such apathy that he decided to patent it and bring it to the notice of the mercantile marine. The book was, we are told, begun during Kelvin's lifetime and with his assistance, and among other matters recorded are Kelvin's part in the early history of the Atlantic cable, his university career, both as undergraduate and as professor, and his views upon several topics of current controversy.

THE same publishers have now almost ready Lord Acton's "Lectures on the French Revolution," held over from last season. The volume contains twenty-two lectures dealing with all the chief points of interest in the Revolution. It opens with a discussion of the writers whose work is generally regarded as heralding the catastrophe, and of the influence of America upon French political thought, and ends with a lecture entitled "After the Terror."

IN the "American Men of Letters" series there is to be issued a "Life of Bret Harte," which will probably be issued in this country by Messrs. Constable. The book is the work of Mr. H. C. Merwin, who has been engaged upon it for several years and has had access to unpublished manuscripts and other authoritative sources.

A BIOGRAPHY of Lord Morley, by Miss E. Major, is announced by Messrs. Nisbet. It deals with Lord Morley both as man of letters and as statesman, special attention being given to his Indian administration.

"THREE MODERN SEERS" is the title of a study by Mrs. Havelock Ellis of the philosophical teaching of Nietzsche, Edward Carpenter, and James Hinton. Hinton was a London surgeon of distinction, whose writings, though often striking and suggestive, have received little attention outside a small circle of admirers. The book will be published by Mr. Stanley Paul.

THE second of the three volumes of Sir Herbert Maxwell's "A Century of Empire" is to be published during the present season by Mr. Arnold. It begins with the year of the Reform Act, and it will be of special interest at the present juncture to see how the steps necessary to secure that great measure appear to a frankly Tory historian.

THE age of Henry of Navarre has been chosen for a volume of biographical sketches by the writer who calls himself "Le Petit Homme Rouge." It is one of the most stirring and attractive periods in French history, abounding in dramatic incidents and strong personalities, so that the author, who has issued several volumes dealing with the French Court, has a rich store of material at his disposal. Messrs. Chatto & Windus are to be the publishers.

AN interesting by-path of history has been explored by Mr. C. K. Bolton in a work called "Scottish Irish Pioneers in Ulster and America," which is to appear during the present season. Mr. Bolton has aimed at giving a systematic history of the emigrations from Ireland to the British colonies in America, before the time of the Revolution. His record is largely based on unpublished material, and is said to contain several new facts of interest, especially in relation to the Southern colonies.

BY the sudden death of M. Edouard Rod on Saturday last the world of French letters is deprived of a serious and influential writer, if not a great novelist. M. Rod was a Swiss, and occupied for some time the position of Professor of Comparative Literature at Geneva. He left the University for Paris while still a young man, and threw himself enthusiastically into the campaign for realism in literature, which Zola, Maupassant, Huysmans, and the Goncourts were conducting. He modified his attitude in later years, becoming a "moralist" in the French meaning of the term, and using fiction chiefly as a means for expressing his social theories. He never attained the lightness and grace of style possessed by his French colleagues, but his books were widely read by thoughtful people. His most popular novels were "La Vie Privée de Michel Teissier," "La Seconde Vie de Michel Teissier," and "L'Inutile Effort," all of them romans à thèse. He also produced a critical work of value, "Idées Morales du Temps Présent."

THE first number of a new monthly magazine called "The Tramp" will appear in March. "The Tramp" will contain articles on little-known places in England and abroad, descriptions of walking tours, and articles on all subjects connected with travel. Short stories and sketches of an unconventional character will also be included, and a special feature will be made of modern verse. The editor, Mr. Douglas Goldring, has secured a strong list of contributors, and the venture is altogether a promising protest against literary and other conventionalities.

A SERIES, called "Masterpieces of the English Drama," has been arranged for under the general editorship of Mr. Alexander Jessup, who is also editor of Lippincott's "French Men of Letters" series. Each volume in the new series will contain four complete plays by a single dramatist, and will be edited by a different scholar. Amongst those in active preparation are "George Chapman," by Mr. Havelock Ellis; "William Congreve," by Mr. William Archer; "Christopher Marlowe," by Professor W. L. Phelps; "Ben Jonson," by Mr. Ernest Rhys; and "Beaumont and Fletcher," by Professor Felix Schelling.

Reviews.

OXFORD REFORM.*

It is difficult not to yield to impulse, and proclaim that Mr. Snow's book on the Reform of the University of Oxford is incomparably the best and wisest thing that has been written on this generally dispiriting subject. It is probably the sheer beauty of the book that is so persuasive, and beauty may be a dangerous guide. But, however that may be, Mr. Snow has converted the present reviewer—converted him, first, to a belief that Greek should be compulsory for the literary M.A. courses; and, secondly, to a belief in the mission of Oxford. If our present Oxford can really rise, shaking off the elements of mediocrity, snobbishness, and lack of faith which now stifle her, to be something like what Mr. Snow describes, she will, indeed, be a University for which men will be proud to live and die.

The great difference between this treatise and the various reforming articles which have appeared hitherto, the articles in the "Morning Post," those in the "Westminster Gazette," and the *grandis epistola* of Lord Curzon, lies not so much in the conclusions as in the spirit. True, the conclusions are different, too, but the spirit is more so. Roughly speaking—though the phrase does injustice to particular writers—the measures of the average "Morning Post" reformer, if carried out, would land us in a respectable and honest establishment for the rich, teaching a great many popular subjects, and attracting an increasing number of students by means of a shorter and less thorough course and a lower and wider entrance examination. The classical course would be lightened by throwing overboard the most difficult parts of it, which happen to be the most valuable; and, in Lord Curzon's scheme at least, business men would be attracted by a course in Commerce. We should get a University which, in spite of its many drawbacks in tradition, buildings, and situation, might in time be intellectually as good as Birmingham, though it could not hope to equal Harvard. A phrase constantly on the lips of this type of reformer is the argument that, if we fail to do so-and-so, the provincial universities will draw away our customers.

Now, what is the fallacy in all this? The fallacy is to suppose that the Universities are like rival shops, and that each University must contrive to sell all the wares that another does. The truth is that all the Universities between them are but imperfectly supplying the intellectual needs of the nation, and that in so doing they must co-operate. Glasgow has a great shipbuilding school, with an enormous tank for experiments. Is Oxford to make, with its utterly inferior resources, a little inland tank, in order that youths who wish to study shipbuilding may do so in the best public school society? Are we to start a school of brewing, because Birmingham has done so? No one urges either of these things; yet we have just established an Engineering School, with an excellent professor, but no plant at all, while Birmingham, barely an hour off by train, has the finest engineering plant in the world. And this at a time when an institution like the Bodleian, the pride of Oxford and a thing unique in the world, is crippled with poverty!

Why is it that anyone makes such a mistake? It is, we believe, partly that Oxford men are a little apt to forget the existence—and, we may add, the excellence—of the many new universities, and so to imagine that Oxford and Cambridge are the only real universities in the land. Partly, it is a widespread, unconscious snobbishness, which regards a university education primarily, not as an education at all, but as a class-stamp. The parent wishes to be able to say that he has a son at Balliol. Good, but, unfortunately, the son happens to be unfit for the higher studies pursued at Balliol. The boy is rich: let Balliol lower its standard a bit, or admit book-keeping by double entry instead of Greek or philosophy.

The answer to this is, first, to remember that the other universities exist and flourish, and deserve to flourish; and, secondly, that no university ought to lower its standard or risk spoiling its course in order to please persons who are

not suited for it, and can get what they are suited for elsewhere.

If the commercial man or the science man was in any difficulty about his higher training in those subjects, the case would be different. Provision for the highest scientific education is, of course, an absolute necessity. But he is not. Scientific and commercial foundations are plenteous as blackberries, and their endowments are increasing every day. There are sixteen universities in the United Kingdom; there are probably some fifty or sixty universities accessible to English-speaking students. Some excel in one department, some in another. Two of the number excel in the department of Literature, History, and Philosophy, based upon the study of antiquity. Is it a hardship on anyone if they insist on an entrance examination adapted to their particular form of education? There are fourteen other universities in the Kingdom for the non-classical boy to choose from.

There is no hardship. There is only a question whether the sort of education which Oxford and Cambridge give, and which can be had at no other university in the English-speaking world, is worth keeping, and worth improving. It is here that Mr. Snow's book comes in. "This literary spirit is, among its other qualities, historical. It is not content with knowing things unless it knows their origins, and on the spiritual and intellectual side half our origins are Greek. In religion, philosophy, political thinking, fine art, the formal and conscious side of literature, the mathematical side of science, we are building on Greek foundations. The rank and file of intelligent people, the world of interested but unlearned readers, has to take these origins on trust, but a University is not a place for the rank and file. It is a place for leaders, for the people whose business it is to know these origins, if the common thinking of the unlearned is not to degenerate into a repetition of second-hand commonplaces."

The University is a place for leaders, but it is not a preserve for any class or any standard of income.

"The studies that are rising now are those that 'have money in them.' The time when plutocrats are attacking Greek is the time for Socialists to take it up."

"For, indeed, so long as there continue to be rich and poor, literary studies ought to be the studies of the poor. They are the best way, as I believe, and certainly the cheapest and most portable way, of satisfying the mental and spiritual wants of life. People must satisfy those wants somehow, just as they must satisfy their bodily wants—*panem et circenses*. It depends on their education whether they are to get their *circenses* out of gambling and fighting and drinking, or, at best, out of sport and mere frivolity, or out of religion and knowledge and art and politics and poetry and humor and love—in short, out of the components of literature. As Bishop Fraser's friend told him, 'Drink is the shortest way out of Ancoats.' Give Ancoats a chance and Ancoats will find that Homer is a better way."

We say nothing here of practical methods. They are carefully stated in the book. But, in general, the classical course for entrance is to be lightened by omitting all composition—including Latin prose—and all grammar except what is necessary for translation. To read and understand, in some degree, the great literature is the first thing; to analyse the language or to write it yourself is a thing that may come afterwards.

"As things are now, if you ask an ordinary business man, who has been to a grammar school and left it early, whether he ever learned any Greek, he will say, I once learned *ὁ ἦ ῥό*. If elementary Greek is to mean that and no more, certainly it will be of no use in itself, and there will be something invidious in retaining it as a protection to the further Greek of more fortunate boys. But suppose we can make the same man's successors say, 'I once read about Hector and Andromache,' or 'I once read the Beatitudes'?"

"*Mater ubique tuus, liceat modo nunc quoque, miles*": so runs the motto inscribed on this book. And whether his Alma Mater listens or no, the author has indeed shown himself her soldier.

THE REIGN OF LOUIS THE FIFTEENTH.*

It would be difficult to name a period in which the failure of government has created so wild a world of blunder, anarchy, and disease as the last period of the French

* "How to Save Greek, and Other Paradoxes of Oxford Reform." By T. C. Snow, M.A., late Fellow of St. John's College. Simpkin Marshall & Co. 2s.

* "Histoire de France: Tome Huitième. Le Règne de Louis XV." Par H. Carré, Professeur à l'Université de Poitiers. Hachette. 6 fr.

Monarchy. The death of Louis XV. leaves one brief moment for recovery, but the sands have almost run out when that disfigured corpse passes to the royal peace of St. Denis amid the jeers of jesting Paris. From his death-bed Louis the Fourteenth had warned his successors to remember the miseries of their people, and his words found their echo in the dying prayer of his great-grandson. But a death-bed repentance seldom amounts to restitution, and the French Monarchy learnt nothing from the remorse of dying kings. The truth is that the Monarchy was designed by Richelieu and Mazarin for other men than the last Bourbons. Louis the Fourteenth rescinded in one moment of pious zeal the religious settlement that had given its prosperity to France, and his hurricanes of pride and temper made shipwreck of her finance and her resources. Louis the Fifteenth had about as much self-control as one of the later Roman Emperors. If your Government is not a Government of laws, but of men, it matters enormously what sort of men are in power. Richelieu, in giving its final form to the French Monarchy, had taken it out of the reach of faction and civil war, but had put that omnipotent and absolutist throne at the mercy of the passions of individuals. Those passions destroyed it.

One attempt was made, indeed, to change that final form, and the beginning of the period covered by this volume is interesting for the Regent's experiment with the ideas of Fénelon. If the Duke of Burgundy had not been carried off by small-pox, he would certainly have made a serious effort to restore the power of the nobles, and to break down the centralised system of Versailles. It may be doubted whether the attempt would have succeeded if it had been made under the most auspicious conditions. Orleans was less of an enthusiast than Burgundy, and in his hands the experiment was a failure. It happened that France tried this plan at the very moment that Spain had abandoned it. Alberoni had just put the finishing touch to the process that introduced the French absolutist methods into Spanish administration. The Spanish Ambassador remarked at the time of the September declaration, announcing the departure from the old order in France: "Les Français ont habillé leur gouvernement à l'espagnole; mais la golielle leur ira aussi mal que la cravate nous allait mal à nous-mêmes au début." But the beginning of the Regency was marked by a reaction against the Versailles system, and men's thoughts turned to this aristocratic scheme as the only alternative. Seven Councils were created under the General Council of Regency, on which there sat the presidents of other Councils. The other Councils were those of Home Affairs, Conscience, War, Marine, Finance, Foreign Affairs, and Commerce. Saint Simon had wished to confine membership to the greater nobles, but Orleans took in some of his dissolute friends, and he was shrewd enough to know that government could not be carried on without the help of the trained bureaucrats. Thus the old and the new systems met in these institutions. Antagonism was inevitable. The Councils were not in all respects ineffective, for during these years there was a great development of roads and bridges. But the history of the Councils justified Louis XIV.'s scepticism; for, as the business was troublesome and tedious, the nobles soon lost their interest in them, and left them to their fate. Meanwhile, Orleans himself began to revert to the traditional methods. He began to withdraw important affairs from the Council of the Regency, and to receive the Presidents of the other Councils in private, thus reducing them to the status of the old secretaries. Dubois wrote to Orleans in August, 1718, urging him to suppress the Councils. He said that when the King became his own master they would certainly disappear, and that Orleans would have all the discredit of the destruction of the system he had introduced, and that he ought to lose no time in getting rid of the "grands seigneurs," and replacing them by simple Secretaries of State, who, as they had neither reputation nor family, would be simply his creatures. One by one the Councils flickered out, and the Council of the Regency itself disappeared in 1723. M. Carré (whose volume maintains the high standard of the series) summarises the causes of the failure of the experiment thus: the incapacity of many who took part in the Councils; conflicts between the nobles and the bureaucrats; the indifference of the public after the first excitement was over; the want of enthusiasm of the Regent; the opposition of many who had

a personal interest in the restoration of the old system; and the inadequacy of a reform which did not concede either a representative régime or a serious control of government.

With the failure of this scheme, everything turned on the character of Louis XV. But, as M. Carré observes, the restoration of the old prestige of the Monarchy would only have been possible if he had been a perfect monarch. In such a situation it was a cruel irony that gave Louis XV. as King to France. Not that Louis was stupid, though his nervousness made him seem stupid. He was so self-conscious and timid that when he found in Madame Amelot someone still more timid than himself, that fact alone made him enjoy her society. His dread of new faces made him cling to his old Ministers. M. Carré thinks that he had ability enough if only he had made up his mind to govern. Twice he formed such a resolution: once after the disgrace of Bourbon in 1726, and again after the death of Fleury; but his idleness and his love of pleasure overcame him. He took, indeed, a strange and morbid interest in politics, for he had a secret police and a secret diplomatic intelligence service of his own. But, as M. Carré says, he made no use of his information, and he did not attempt to prevent mistakes that he foresaw. He was paralysed by nervousness, indolence, and his passion for amusement. His whole time was given up to hunting, and this, the main business of his life, he arranged with the utmost care and mastery of detail. When he did not go hunting, it was announced that "the King does nothing to-day." His sensual life seems to have begun from finding his wife dull. His first intrigue was regarded with composure even by the more virtuous of his contemporaries, who were not a little taken aback as one sister succeeded another in those rapid developments which were celebrated in a lampoon:—

"L'une est presque en oubli, l'autre presque en poussière;
La troisième est en pied; la quatrième attend
Pour faire place à la dernière.
Choisir une famille entière
Est-ce d'être infidèle ou constant?"

There seems to have been from the first a morbid strain in Louis XV.'s character. As a boy he had cruel habits, enjoying torturing birds. As a man, he took a strange interest in corpses, funerals, diseases. He was superstitious, and never lost his fear of Hell, and was punctual and regular in all religious devotions. "He follows the processions, kneels in the street when the viaticum is carried, but neither his piety nor his dread of Hell preserved him from a single vice." He had scarcely any intellectual education. Before he had grown up he was "déjà ennuyé, blasé, indolent." He had plenty of physical courage. Madame de Châteauroux persuaded him to throw aside his idleness and go to the front in Flanders in 1744. At Metz he fell ill, and was believed to be dying. All France wept and prayed for him. Unfortunately for himself, and unfortunately for France, he recovered, to die thirty years later hated and despised by the world.

"Provida Pompeio dederat Campania febres
Optandas: sed multae urbes et publica vota
Vicerunt."

While the King was sinking into a condition of sensual lethargy France herself was full of energy and movement. The ideas of the Philosophers and the Economists spread fast in an aristocracy that was allowed no duties. In the decadence of the Monarchy there flourished the emancipating minds of Montesquieu, Voltaire, Diderot, Quesnai, and the passionate genius of the apostle of the Revolution. The King, almost alone, never gave a thought to improvement or to the regeneration of the community of which he was the costly ornament. De Tocqueville has some droll remarks on the way in which the intendants, catching the atmosphere of social sensibility, spoke and wrote of the trampled peasants. M. Carré thinks that, on the whole, the lot of the cultivators of the soil was better at the end of the reign than at the beginning, thanks to the influence of the Agricultural Societies, the Economists, and public opinion working on the local administration. But the burdens on the poverty of the nation, and the thousand and one obstacles to its enterprise and its freedom, became steadily more intolerable, and Louis XV., dying as he had lived, with a cynical selfishness in his heart, summed up alike the conscience of the consequences of his reign in the cry, "Après moi le déluge."

A SEVENTEENTH CENTURY QUIETIST.*

To most English readers the very name of Antoinette Bourignon is unknown. In Scotland it is indirectly familiar to theological students, because in 1711 the General Assembly classed her with Arius Socinus, Arminius, and the Pope, requiring candidates for the ministry to renounce her errors. This test of orthodoxy was maintained till 1889; but long before this she had been forgotten; and Professor Macewen's suggestive study of her life (1616-1680) and writings reopens a closed page of history, the problems of which present not a few points of contact with those of our own day. The record, indeed, is one of singular interest and significance:—

"In the latter half of the seventeenth century the life of the Reformed and the Roman Churches was at a low ebb. Dogmatism, superstition, and secularism were in possession, and it is instructive to see how a serious and vigorous mind came to abandon all definitely Christian dogma and to indulge in extravagances. Light is thrown upon the position and attitude of the celebrated quietists who were her contemporaries, and also upon the prevalence of revivalism, mysticism, and rationalism in eighteenth-century religion."

The line between saint and heretic is narrow. A slight, a very slight, change in the circumstances, and Antoinette Bourignon might have been a Catherine of Genoa. The docile temper of post-Tridentine sanctity, indeed, was not here; but her protests against externalism in religion, her denunciations of the clergy and the clericalism of her time may be paralleled in writers of acknowledged orthodoxy; a turn of the wheel, "the little more" or "the little less" of the poet, and the charmed circle might well have embraced her. As it was—though she seems never formally to have left the Roman Church—in 1700 the Vicar Apostolic in Scotland exhorted his flock against "the errors of the Borigionites" (*sic*), the Nuncio at Paris warned Propaganda of their prevalence, and Professor Macewen tells us of an all but successful attempt to assassinate her, in which the Roman authorities joined. Her character, like her teaching, was strangely mixed. She possessed not a few of the distinctive virtues of Catholic sanctity; she also possessed certain notorious and exceptionally disagreeable faults. And the reflection suggests itself that the life of a saint written with Professor Macewen's detachment and candor would be a document of singular interest. The hagiographer levels down in the interests of edification; the result is a lay figure—the wires are pulled, and the puppet dances; but it is machinery, not life. She was pathologically a sensitive and a neurasthenic; on one occasion she remained in a trance for eight days. At an early age she developed tendencies to megalomania and asceticism. The religious life attracted her; but no convent would receive her without a dowry, and her father, who had a low opinion of these institutions, refused his consent. Her Jesuit director, sensibly enough, advised her to marry, upon which she dispensed with his future services, having recourse for confession to her parish priest. It throws a light upon the relations between the regular and the secular clergy, relations which are little if at all changed in our own time, to read that, upon this becoming known, "she was visited by the religious of the several orders, who warned her that she would certainly be deluded by the devil for want of a director." The Protestant reader will learn with less satisfaction that she discarded not only her director but her Bible. "I read no more, because God taught me all that I needed." For twenty years she made no use of it; her self-opinionatedness was abnormal; never, it seems, for a moment did she lose sight of the Idols of the Cave. A grim, dour woman, without a touch of charm or womanliness, greedy of gear, a hard bargainer, a contemner of the brethren—"she had an inward assurance that three-fourths of mankind had consciously given themselves over to the devil, and that she had a divine commission to bring this fact to light." Autocratic and overbearing to excess, she was intolerant of the slightest independence: "a man would injure his conscience if he contradicted her on a single point, so clear is it that she is directly guided by God!" Courageous withal, a firm friend, and transparently truthful, she possessed a rare spiritual insight: "she had thoughts of God and con-

ceptions of truth far above the level of those that prevailed about her"; hers was "a loftier plane, a larger view."

In the world of ideas she moved easily; but both her qualities and her defects were such as to unfit her for practical life. When, in 1653, she assumed the charge of an orphanage, she terrified the children by perpetually speaking to them of hell, and the "little black devils who were seeking to win their souls." The result, not unnaturally, was an outbreak of hysteria, put down to diabolical possession by the superstition of the age. It is creditable to the magistrates of Lille that, on the consequent trial, the children were acquitted of the charge of witchcraft, and the directors admonished to treat them with less severity. "The devil has his epochs," observes Professor Macewen; "and in the seventeenth century his power was great, reaching to every sect and nationality." The suspicion of magic attached to her throughout, probably by reason of the nervous disorders from which she suffered. The ground of her arrest in 1680 was that "she had power to contract and enlarge her person"—a not uncommon pathological phenomenon. It was as a witch rather than as a heretic that she inspired fear. The quality of her mind was critical: she stood aloof from the popular controversies of her time. A nominal member of the Church of Rome, she was neither Catholic nor Protestant, Jesuit nor Jansenist: the members of her colony at Nordstrand were forbidden to adhere to any sect or special religion, or to follow the usages and instructions of any; they must belong only to "the Christian Church." Disputes about sufficient and effectual grace, she held, were mere words:—

"It is indisputable that men require grace for salvation, but then God has given and will give to all men such grace as they require. He has created all, heathen and Christians alike, for salvation; the concealment of this truth is the chief offence of the Church. The Church of Rome, in particular, has become a great and boastful harlot. Monastic life is a fraud, and convents are the invention of the devil; the confessional is full of mischief and danger; modern churchmen have put the Eucharist in the place of Christ. The true Church is invisible, and exists only in the hearts of the faithful: if we bind ourselves by the opinions of the ancient Fathers we hinder the work of the Spirit; we must turn away from the so-called Church and seek for God in our hearts, remembering that He is always teaching new truths."

The Reformed Churches fared little better at her hands than the Roman. She disliked Calvinists and Arminians impartially: of the central doctrine of the Reformation, justification by Faith only, "it is an idea which stinks in God's nostrils," she wrote; "to propagate it is to sin against the Holy Ghost." Like the Modernists of to-day, while repudiating, or taking in a non-natural sense, every Catholic doctrine, she made vehement protestations of her Catholicism. Protestants took her for a Catholic, Catholics for a Protestant: the fact was that, in spite of her curiously unmythical failings, she was a mystic; the three-dimension space of denominationalism was not hers. Those who were sensible of the aridity of the religious world of the time were drawn to her. So wise and good a man as the Moravian Comenius held her in reverence, and clung to her for hope and consolation on his death-bed; Labadie was desirous of her co-operation—which she refused owing to her unwillingness to build up anything like a church. "The Holy Spirit," she wrote to him, "presides over no human assemblies": this settled conviction separated her even from that most unchurchlike of bodies, the Society of Friends.

Her theology, as such, did not escape the dangers that beset the narrow path of the mystic; a swerve to the right hand or the left and his balance is lost. She held the Scotist, as opposed to the Thomist view of the Incarnation: her doctrine of the Trinity was what theologians would label Sabellian, her Christology Socinian; the Atonement was "a cruel, hateful thought, set up, like the abomination of desolation, in the sanctuary"; she failed, says her biographer, to attach any unique office to Christ. It must be remembered that this, like other central truths, was presented by the current orthodoxy in its baldest and most unspiritual shape. A religious mind, just because it was religious, might well reject such a presentation, and fall back from Christianity upon conscience, from the Churches upon the light within. And it is probable that her formulas were more divergent from orthodoxy than her meaning. The clergy, Catholic and Protestant alike, dreaded less her

* "Antoinette Bourignon: Quietist." By Alex. R. Macewen, D.D., Professor of Church History in New College, Edinburgh. Hodder & Stoughton. 3s. 6d.

heresies than her anti-clericalism: this, for clerics, is the unpardonable sin.

Professor Macewen sums up her career with insight and sympathy:—

"Her condemnation of the Churches of her time had a very solid foundation. Their methods and ministrations had many unchristian features. The doctrines which they selected for emphasis were grim and depressing. Worship and sacraments were to a large extent regarded formally. The spirit of unfruitful contention and wholesale antagonism was rife. Above all, the religious importance of conduct was ignored or kept in the background. The ethical and social ideals which churchmen favored were at variance with the Gospel of Jesus. In no writings of the period, not even in those of George Fox, is all this made clearer than in hers. . . . She gains distinction from the darkness which surrounded her. The Christianity of those days was dominated by the notion that revelation was wholly a matter of the past, God having revealed Himself finally in Palestine, so that any claim to be directly guided by him was a profane pretence. It was something to insist strenuously and fearlessly for a lifetime upon the truth that everyone, by self-denying aspiration and without official help, can reach peace with the Eternal Being, with conscious enjoyment of His light, and that neither nature nor grace abates human responsibility."

ABRAHAM LINCOLN.*

To the half-dozen good books written about Abraham Lincoln we must add this commemorative address of Dr. Putnam. Aiming not at biography, but at informed appreciation, it achieves real excellence. For the writer in a few chapters has succeeded in so relating the man to his great national task as to exhibit his true place in history more effectively than any other writer we have read. The fascinating story of his boyhood, and the multifarious trades and wanderings which made him so representative an American, he touches lightly, leaving such matters to formal biographers. But Lincoln's political career, and the magnificent resources of thought and character it unfolded, are presented in a masterly manner by one who, in his youth, lived through these great days, and bore no unworthy part in the great struggle. The critical acts of Lincoln are described with a vigor which never runs to waste. We see the powerful grasp with which the national statesman set his mind of steel to the issue, "Can the nation exist half-slave and half-free?" developing the full essence of the politics of the situation in his great debate with Stephen Douglas. Why such an art of political controversy has perished from modern party struggles, is a question that deserves consideration. For Dr. Putnam well observes, "I can conceive no better method for bringing representative government on to a higher plane, and for making an election what it ought to be, a reasonable decision by reasoning voters, than the institution of joint debates."

The union of powerful principle with the capacity of compromise has never been better illustrated than in these few years of Lincoln's rule. On minor matters he was flexible, even to weakness; on major matters he was never bent by other wills, but often of set deliberation took a middle course. How essential was this strong moderation Dr. Putnam shows very clearly. With all his hatred of slavery, Lincoln steadfastly refused to lend himself to the demands of the extreme anti-slavery men, who would encroach upon the legal rights of the slave States. The extraordinary skill with which, an official novice hoisted suddenly into the Presidential seat, he encountered the pretensions of his State Secretary Seward, and the hardly less troublesome machinations of Mr. Chase, the blend of humor and contempt with which he handled office-seekers, his capacity of appeasing or of disregarding hostility, and his profound knowledge of humanity, have never found an equal among the trained statesmen of the modern world. Dr. Putnam tells equally well the political and the military story, with the details of which he shows a fine, but not embarrassing familiarity. Lincoln's troubles in the conduct of the war he summarises in a telling paragraph:—

"Difficult as was the task of the men who led columns into action, of the generals in the field who had the immediate responsibility for the direction of those columns, and of the fighting line, it was in no way to be compared with the pressure and the sadness of the burden of the man who stood back of all the lines, and to whom came all the discouragements, the com-

plaints, the growls, the criticisms, the requisitions or demands for resources that were not available, the reports of disasters, sometimes exaggerated and sometimes unduly smoothed over, the futile suggestions, the absurd schemes, the self-seeking applications, that poured into the White House from all points of the field of action, and from all parts of the Border States and of the North."

Besides all the trouble at home there were the constant threats of European intervention, which during the war hung over the Northern cause. For home-keeping politicians in America, foreign diplomacy has always proved a severe test. But Lincoln, as ignorant of European politics as of diplomatic methods, never made a blunder. One principle sufficed for him: he was not to take on any business but the one in hand. He just lived to see that through. Dr. Putnam tells how the news of his death fell upon the troops:—

"The Division Adjutant stepped out on the porch of the headquarters with the paper in his hand, but he broke down before he could begin to read. The Division Commander took the word, and was able simply to announce, 'Lincoln is dead.' The word President was not necessary, and he sought, in fact, for the shortest word. I never before had found myself in a mass of men overcome by emotion. Ten thousand soldiers were sobbing together. No survivor of the group can recall the sadness of that morning without again being touched by the wave of emotion which broke down the reserve and control of these war-worn veterans on learning that their great captain was dead."

THE INGENIOUS MR. HOGARTH.*

"OTHER pictures we look at—his prints we read," wrote Charles Lamb in a memorable passage on William Hogarth. In the same strain Horace Walpole had described the artist as "a writer of comedy with a pencil." It was the tendency among the literary critics of Hogarth's own time to regard him chiefly as a moralist and secondarily as a painter, and this view prevailed for many years after his death. But Walter Savage Landor wrote to John Forster that "in his portraits he is as true as Gainsborough, as historical as Titian," and the higher claim for Hogarth's position in the world of art has lately been pressed by many a latter-day enthusiast. The famous Portrait of Himself with his Dog Trump in the National Gallery, and that of "Captain Coram" in the Foundling Hospital, are held to establish Hogarth's equality with the great masters of color in the eighteenth century, with Reynolds, Gainsborough, Romney, and the rest. In fact, the contemporary idea of Hogarth as the satirical moralist of London life has with critics, with literary critics especially, given place to a conception of his art that places him on a far higher pinnacle of fame.

Walpole's estimate of Hogarth, which denied to him any but the scantiest merit as a painter, was undoubtedly too narrow. At the same time we should hesitate about accepting Landor's extravagant eulogy of his portraits or taking as the last word in Hogarthian criticism the superlative modern estimate of his position on the Olympus of Fine Art. We are the last to deny to his "Conversations" and "Assemblies" a unique artistic power as well as a human moral, nor do we forget that Whistler set the seal of his approbation upon them. The two great portraits which we have mentioned undoubtedly rank among the finest work of the English School, and if more of his portraits were known to us—there are a vast number that have never been traced—it is possible that his fame in this branch of art would be greatly enhanced. On the other hand, a cool and reflective judgment might decree that such works were not up to the standard of the "Captain Coram," and, inferentially, that the portraits we know were such as an ordinarily mediocre portraitist might, and often does, produce in a moment of unusual inspiration. There are, too, at least two opinions possible as to the artistic and dramatic merits of some of the larger "Conversation" pieces. We frankly confess that when one or two examples of this kind were shown at the Academy winter exhibition of 1908, we were appalled by their woodenness. It seemed in no way less than that observable in Hogarth's confessed failures in the Grand Style; the drama at which the artist aimed came perilously near to the burlesque that his enemies taunted him with; the movement of the figures was the arrested movement of the jointed doll. The fact, however,

*"Abraham Lincoln." By George Craven Putnam. Putnam's. 6s. net.

*"Hogarth's London." By H. B. Wheatley. Constable. 21s. net.

that Hogarth, painting on the large scale, may have produced mature works that in point of color and movement were not conspicuously superior to a Zoffany or a very early Gainsborough, in no way interferes with one's appreciation of the "Marriage à la Mode" and other series of small pictures by which he is mainly remembered. It only illustrates the possible danger, or if not this, the foolishness, of claiming more than is necessary to establish Hogarth's greatness.

For, if Hogarth had never painted a masterly portrait, if he had never produced anything but the small conversation pieces that in the aggregate make up a complete pictorial history of the London of his time, his greatness would none the less be assured. No better proof of this could be brought forward than Mr. Wheatley's book, which, dealing wholly with the significance of Hogarth's pictures of London life, and adducing only a brief and impartial summary of evidence for and against his title to a wider fame, shows us the painter-moralist in the most intimate light that painstaking research can shed. Hogarth appears as the Great Londoner, reverencing his city and drawn to its people even while he chided them; he is the great artist devoting himself to the immortalising of his age, careless of the labor it cost, and indifferent to what posterity might say of him. No man ever worked less for posterity. Mr. Wheatley carefully analyses each social phase that he treated, and it is shown how exhaustive a study of London custom and morality the total output is. One must remember, of course, the comparative unity of Society in those days. Not being split up into the many sections divided, as now, by subtle differences of taste, it was easier to comprehend as a whole; and this explains how it was that Hogarth, leading the quiet domestic life of the ordinary middle-class citizen, was yet able to seize and register with scrupulous truth the characteristics, virtues, and vices of every grade. His observation of the lower classes gave him a first-hand acquaintance with human nature, and it was his knowledge of human nature that enabled him to represent with the utmost truth the life, as in the "Marriage à la mode," of an upper class that he could not have had the opportunity for studying otherwise than through an occasional glimpse of their drawing-rooms. And so we see this "strutting, consequential little man"—as Benjamin West called him—peering into High Life and Low Life, Life Political and Business and Professional, Theatrical Life, and the life of prisons and madhouses, always with the same keen eye for a subject for his satiric pencil, and always with a thought beyond the satire, a calculated artistic purpose.

"I have endeavored to treat my subjects as a dramatic writer; my picture is my stage, and men and women my players who, by means of certain actions and gestures, are to exhibit a dumb show," he wrote of himself, and the dramatic quality of his pictures cannot be too strongly insisted upon. It was serious drama, not burlesque; drama with a purpose; and no one was more bitterly resentful of the imputation of caricature than the painter himself. For the dramatic character of Hogarth's genius his close association with the stage of the day may have been partly responsible. The readiness with which he seized upon such a subject as the performance of Gay's "Beggar's Opera" for pictorial treatment is at any rate witness to the intense admiration and respect he had for native drama. He was no mean champion of its cause; not only glorifying the dramatic idea by making it the keynote of his art, but throwing himself heart and soul into the task of defending it against alien intruders. There are no more pungent satires in Hogarth's portfolio than those which deal with the public infatuation for Italian opera and masquerades. He condemned these "foreign fashions" just as he condemned the connoisseurs of the day for their extravagant patronage of the "Black Masters" and their consequent neglect of contemporary British art. His attitude on the latter subject has been severely criticised, and his enemies accused him of a wholesale philistinism, due to personal annoyance at the neglect shown to his own pictures. But this was not quite the case. His quarrel was not with the old masters, but with their ignorant appraisers.

Hogarth's life is a story of touching friendships and bitter enmities. His relations with Garrick, Gay, Fielding, and other eminent characters who helped to fill the stage on

which he moved, were of the pleasantest. The history of his long duel with Wilkes, the demagogue, and Charles Churchill, the poetaster, is a fine example of eighteenth-century amenities. It was an age in which the bludgeon was more serviceable than the rapier; and Hogarth used the bludgeon for castigating, not only his personal opponents, but also the sins of the corporate society at his doors. His irony and wit were of the sledge-hammer type. But it must be remembered that the times were rough and hard, and that a fine-edged tool would have blunted its edge ineffectively against them; and before one criticises the grossness of some of Hogarth's satirical prints one should think of the far greater grossness of the real subjects as they presented themselves to him. The London of Hogarth's day is set forth so vividly in Mr. Wheatley's pages that one should not have to think twice before realising that what this great Londoner has left us is no overstatement of what he saw.

THE CENSORSHIP IN ACTION.*

THE Library Censorship has already fallen into the trap which, in the present condition of English letters, awaits all censorship, literary or theatrical. It has assumed as its standard a certain type of marketable article, and has decided that it will not countenance any deviations from that standard. Two books have been refused circulation; whether by way of the major or the minor excommunication, by a refusal to sell them, or to recommend them for sale unless they happen to be specially asked for, we do not know. Neither, so far as we can discover, contains a gross word or an alluring description. One has a very incidental and subordinate sexual interest, being in the main concerned with carefully elaborated and quite conventional descriptions of the life which white men live in West Africa, under the unusual restraints of white women's society. We can imagine and sympathise with Miss Gaunt's indignation at her book being made taboo to English readers who know what a very different picture she might have drawn. Mr. Hyatt, whose novel shares the fate of "The Uncounted Cost," has greater matter of complaint. He has taken an old and serious subject, familiar to students of life and of literature, which he treats with reserve, and, so far as phrasing goes, with singular purity. It is the theme of "La Dame aux Camélias," of "Manon Lescaut," of "Joshua Davidson," of "Crime and Punishment," of "Resurrection"; it is the side theme of "Les Misérables"; it forms the most beautiful episode in de Quincey's "Opium Eater," and it happens also to be closely woven into the Gospels, and to be the ground-work of one of the most famous of Christian traditions. In other words, Mr. Hyatt's book deals with the mystery of human nature which its saints and thinkers long ago discovered and made plain to it, that it is possible to soil the body and yet for the soul to go free. It is easy to deny this truth, and to discover every kind of qualification to it. But so long as the Magdalen remains a Christian saint, and the thought of Ann, the child street-walker, brings tears to every eye, such work as Mr. Hyatt's "Black Sheep" cannot be ruled out of literature, and unless we are to people Heaven with Pharisees, cannot be held to be immoral. On the contrary, if it is to be compared with the kind of fiction which the old commercial freedom and the new commercial censorship (and they are mere varieties of the same spirit) usually encourages, the contrast is in the main between work which is moral in intention and in effect and work which has no kind of moral aim or result, between meretricious, venal, and absurdly un-Christian writing, and the effort to represent things as they are, or to discover regenerative forces wherever they may exist.

Why, therefore, was Mr. Hyatt's work deemed unfit for circulation in the chastened society which delights in the novels of Mrs. Glyn? Mr. Hyatt is an artist, not a perfectly original artist. His literary types, and his experiences, derive in a measure from Mr. Kipling. He is fond of showing us the "gentleman ranker," half-hero, half-black-guard, thrust back into the civilisation which drove him out for some slight or reckless fault of youth. This type is not so attractive as the companion figure which M. Pierre Loti

* "Black Sheep." By Stanley Portal Hyatt. Werner Laurie. 6s.
"The Uncounted Cost." By Mary Gaunt. Werner Laurie. 6s.

has invented for his Parisian public. It wants charm and delicacy; above all, perhaps, it wants culture and self-possession. Mr. Kipling's and Mr. Hyatt's wanderers seem to have learned nothing but the arts of killing or governing savages; their Ulysses, come back to Ithaca, is driven straight on to drink and boredom. But in Lalage Penrose, (who is very far away from Horace's "sweetly smiling, sweetly prattling" Lalage) Mr. Hyatt has lit upon a figure which in its turn gives true illumination to his pages. Jim Grierson takes her from the streets, and makes her what nature meant her to be, wife and mother to the man who chose her. But, indeed, she no more belongs to them by right of soul and character than Dostoevsky's Sonia or de Quincey's Ann. Betrayed in innocence, she remains innocent; incapable of cruelty or serious falsity, she is saved by the absence even of the instability and want of self-control which mark her lover. This may be a romantic view; certainly it is a gracious one. Mr. Hyatt chooses to contrast Lalage with the group of conventional sensualists who, in good faith, try to break her relations with Grierson. There, undoubtedly, he forces his point. Grierson's marriage with the selfless Lalage was a right solution; his marriage with the slight, unfeeling girl from his own class and early surroundings who throws him over would have been a wrong solution. But the protesting relatives had a good deal of tough human experience on their side; a more rigorous artist would have drawn them more sympathetically, and a more delicate artist would have kept the earlier tie between Lalage and her lover on a finer string.

For this fault the book suffers. But the practical point is whether it is to be condemned and boycotted. Yes; if all our national literature is to be written *virginibus puerisque*. No; if it cannot be so written. No, again, because with us the practical alternative is that in excluding such work as Mr. Hyatt's we fall back on work which is frequently and obviously immoral. We decree that much of our modern fiction shall pass into the experience of the people, laden with the view that outside the respectable classes exists a mass of glittering and amusing life, which may be tricked out in the brightest coloring, but never set in relation to moral truth. This is the practice of a great volume of our stage-work, which deals with average sensual experience. This, too, is the view of conventional society, which would like to treat the underworld as if it did not exist, or had no right to existence. But the artist and preacher never consent to this view, and never will. They refuse to cut life in two, and in so doing they follow the religious reformer who often finds in the sinners the material for sainthood for which he sought in vain among the respectable. Where, therefore, is Mr. Hyatt wrong? He cannot be accused of grossness of style or suggestion. So far as we have ascertained, the book contains no passage, no sentence, of this character. Does his fault consist in drawing Lalage at all? In this respect, as we have said, he follows all the masters of literature. Or does he offend in making her unexacting, gentle in manner, and essentially pure of heart? Again, he is in line, not only with the great writers, but with the Christian moralists. It is therefore an offence against common sense and enlightened experience to say that such a book as "Black Sheep" can affront minds of average balance. If it does, the details and literary method of "Resurrection"—that is to say, of the greatest of modern novels—will offend them a hundred times more.

Much the same may be said of Miss Gaunt's novel, only with less emphasis, because in truth her work is not directly concerned with morals at all, and is in the main a book of adventure. As far as we can see, the only possible point of objection is that she introduces a lady who has trusted her lover unwisely, and has failed, after two years of companionship, to keep him to his promise of legal union. This episode is not even described. It is over when the book begins; and the point of introducing it is to exhibit the woman's scruples in engaging herself to an honorable man to whom she makes full confession of the past. There are passages in this study of a woman's delicacy which strike us as rather amateurish. There is not one that approaches offence. If the moralist can object to the Censorship's refusal to sell "Black Sheep," the average reader can barely discover a plausible ground for the rejection of "The Uncounted Cost." The libraries, indeed, are following the path set them by Mr. Redford. It will lead to disaster.

The Week in the City.

| | | Price Friday morning, Jan. 28. | Price Friday morning, Feb. 4. |
|-------------------|-----|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Consols | ... | 82½ | 81½ |
| Midland Def. | ... | 58½ | 58½ |
| Union Pacific | ... | 190½ | 187½ |
| Mexican 1st Pref. | ... | 132 | 133½ |
| U.S. Steel | ... | 84½ | 81½ |

THERE are a good many moderate politicians in the City equally afraid of Tariff Reform and Socialism, who think the result of the elections rather satisfactory. They do not see that it is practically impossible for any Liberal Government to stay in office without effecting radical changes, and of course they are all averse to another General Election. "We could not possibly afford it," said one of them to me. Everyone agrees that trade is going ahead, and the money market looks firmer. It is to be hoped that the big fall of last month in the price of raw cotton will last. If so it should mean another run of prosperity for Lancashire Corn merchants, too, are beginning to look for lower prices. The Rothschilds are very busy with the Brazil 4 per Cent. Conversion Loan, which cannot be strongly recommended. It is really a device for getting cash for ordinary purposes. There has been some bad news from New York and Mexico City. In New York, Fish & Robinson, a big and old-established stock exchange and banking house, has failed through the gradual but heavy depreciation of securities in the last few weeks. In Mexico City a run on the United States Banking Co. has compelled it to close its doors, and this suspension has brought down the Mexican Packing Company, whose recent issue in London will be remembered. There are some people who feel rather nervous about the banking and currency situation in the United States, and the New York bankers are just now pursuing a conservative policy which has awkward consequences for large open accounts.

COST OF LIVING IN THE UNITED STATES.

The people of the United States are becoming desperate. Prices are prohibitive. Trade rather drags. Financiers are more nervous and greedier than ever. The new tariff is a hopeless failure. The proposed reforms in banking and currency look more and more difficult of achievement. The following letter from a Brooklyn correspondent to the Editor of the New York "Evening Post," gives a very clear idea of living in the United States, and of the awkward conditions that are being developed in the big towns:—

"Sir,—A clergyman remarked to me, 'My salary is the same as it was ten years ago. The cost of living is forty per cent. higher.'

"The tariff is the most prominent cause of this condition, but not the only one. The writer, who is daily brought in contact with the custom house, often wonders that any dutiable merchandise can be imported and marketed. You have here a few illustrations:

"An invoice, foreign, \$1,500 value cotton goods, duty paid, \$1,214.

"An invoice, foreign, \$6,000 value, cotton goods, duty paid, \$4,200.

"An invoice, foreign, \$412, kid gloves, \$212.

"If Mr. Payne's friend, Littauer, had his way, the third item would have been \$340.

"The goods in question are of such a class that the plain people are the victims. Wealthy people would not use them. Another great cause of high prices is the enormous over-issue of paper currency, a large part of which is under a latent state of suspension of gold payments. Whenever there is a monetary stringency, gold can only be had at a premium. Every one is his own banker. Deflation is increased by the flotation of bank cheques practically uncurrent taking five to thirty days to collect.

"The legal tender act should be repealed; that would be the first step in real currency reform. If the Briton is wise, he will stick to Free Trade. A small duty is the thin end of the wedge."

At the present time both bread and clothing cost twice as much in the United States as in England, and all things are necessarily in proportion. The pretended prosperity is very largely a sham. It will be remembered that just before the election, Messrs. J. & P. Coats endeavored to turn the success of their thread works abroad, where they manufacture under cover of Protection, into an argument for Tariff Reform. But they refused to give any details, and they did not say they were about to close down their main factory

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| .. Reserve Fund | 3,419,190 | 0 0 | .. Money at Call and at Short Notice | 9,868,195 | 15 1 |
| .. Dividend payable on 1st February, 1910 | 341,919 | 0 0 | | | 22,931,995 14 10 |
| .. Balance of Profit and Loss Account | 179,740 | 0 3 | | | |
| | 7,739,949 | 0 3 | .. INVESTMENTS: | | |
| .. Current, Deposit, and other Accounts | 69,644,519 | 16 5 | Consols and other British Government Securities | 3,901,252 | 4 9 |
| .. Acceptances on Account of Customers | 5,128,918 | 0 7 | .. Stocks Guaranteed by British Government, Indian and British Railway Debenture and Preference Stocks, British Corporation Stocks, Colonial and Foreign Government Stocks, etc. | 5,087,050 | 13 3 |
| | £82,513,396 | 17 3 | .. Bills of Exchange | | 8,988,302 18 0 |
| | | | | | 6,785,327 3 9 |
| | | | .. Advances on Current Accounts, Loans on Security and other Accounts... | | 38,715,625 16 7 |
| | | | .. Liabilities of Customers for Acceptances as per contra | | 36,897,233 3 4 |
| | | | .. Bank Premises at Head Office and Branches | | 5,128,918 0 7 |
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